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# ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY



Kenneth Pendar

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ADVENTURE IN  
DIPLOMACY

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*The Emergence of General de Gaulle  
in North Africa*



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CASELL · LONDON

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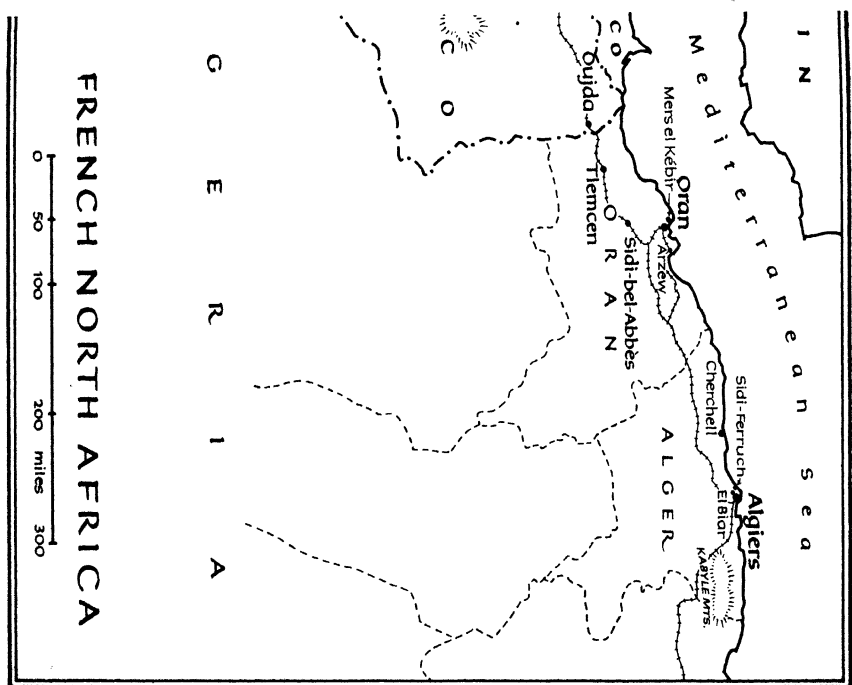
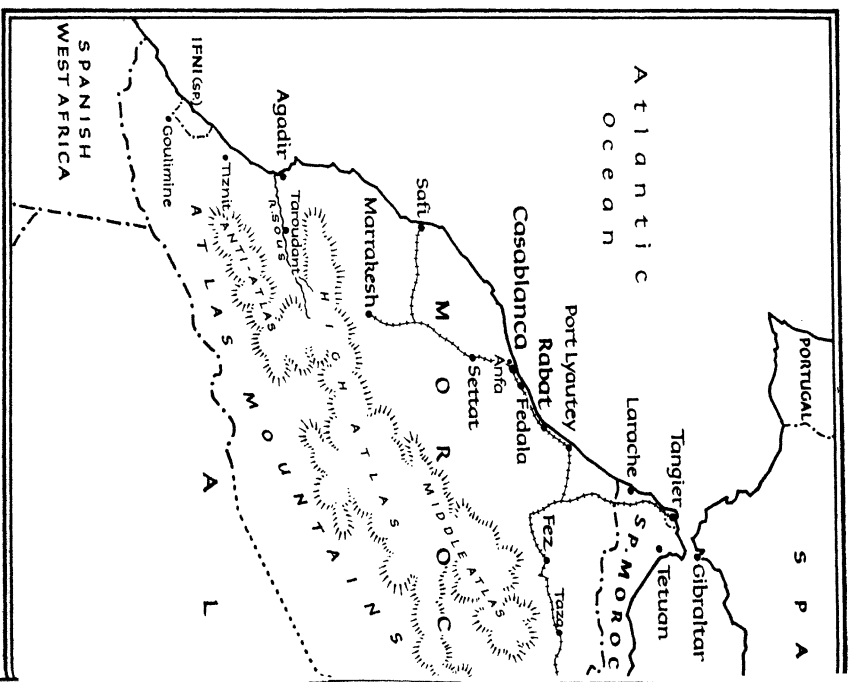
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## Acknowledgements

First I want to acknowledge my gratitude to a very dear friend, the late Ethel Mary de Limur, who in 1944, in overcrowded wartime Washington, gave me the hospitality of her charming house where this book was written. Another friend, Eleanor Lake, I must also thank warmly for her patience during the intense heat of that same summer in assorting and selecting amongst the voluminous material I amassed to write this book and, above all, for her invaluable help in editing the original manuscript. I want likewise to thank my friend Webb Ellis for editing and typing the more recent Prologue and Epilogue to this English edition.

Thanks are also due to the authors and publishers of the following books for permission to reproduce extracts from them: *Journey Down a Blind Alley* by Mary Borden (Lady Spears); *Roosevelt and Hopkins—an Intimate History* by Robert E. Sherwood, Brandt & Brandt and Harper & Bros, New York; *Assignment to Catastrophe* by Major-General Sir Edward L. Spears, Bart., K.B.E., C.B., M.C., Heinemann; and *Diplomat Among Warriors* by Robert Murphy, Collins. Finally I should like to thank the *Economist* for permission to reprint 'L'idée Gaulliste', and the *Daily Telegraph*, *The Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Chicago Daily News* and the *New York Herald Tribune* for permission to reproduce other copyright material.

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## Prologue to the English Edition

*New York, 1966*

It has been a fascinating task to take up a twenty-two-year-old book, long out of print, in order to prepare it for its first publication in England. What is more, it has been a task full of surprises. However, I must explain that I am no more a writer than I was a diplomat when I set out twenty-five years ago, on my first and only mission, described in this book. In 1944 I was not relying on any gifts of authorship, but on an inner conviction that a wrong must be righted. I might even say that this book was compulsively written.

I left French North Africa filled with two conflicting emotions: one of satisfaction that this wartime mission had, from a military point of view, been successful; the other one of apprehension that we Americans, wittingly or unwittingly, were foisting on our ally, France, a government totally dominated by General de Gaulle, who was not only hostile to our country but also a potential danger for the future of Europe and the Atlantic world.

He appeared to me by his acts and attitude revengeful, unforgiving, treacherous, disloyal and filled with hate. Yet he had disguised all these faults by wrapping them up in an overwhelming pride that he then identified and continues to pass off to the world as a burning passion for the glory of France. As an American with pioneer blood in my veins I have an innate aversion to any 'mystique' in government.

When I returned from North Africa to Washington in 1943 I found an ever-increasing wave of admiration taking hold of the American public for this strange man, General de Gaulle, great in all the wrong ways. I sincerely believed at that time that my experience in North Africa had given me an insight into a situation, little known and much distorted, that when explained to my compatriots would help change public opinion. Hence, as a firm believer in the democratic right of free expression I, perhaps naïvely, felt compelled to write and try to publish an eye-witness account of events as I had seen them.

## PROLOGUE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

My audacity was, in fact, more than naïve in thinking that in so vast a country as the United States anyone as obscure as myself could have an effect on public opinion. Furthermore 1945 was an ill-chosen time to attempt, by means of the printed word, to add a small voice to the whirlwind of war news and propaganda. A severe paper shortage limited my kind and indulgent publishers (Dodd, Mead and Company) to a small edition of 2,500 copies.

However, this book had one advantage. It was the first eye-witness account of this confused period in America's first projection in World War II onto the European scene. It was written solely for American readers, but to my surprise there was an increasing demand for a French edition. Consequently in 1948, when de Gaulle had gone into what proved to be a temporary retirement, I gave my consent to a considerably larger edition in France.

As England was the first sponsor of de Gaulle, and her war leaders, in spite of many differences and difficulties, gave him constant, loyal support, English public opinion has, since the war, been favourable towards France and de Gaulle. At the beginning of 1963, just as Britain had finally decided to become an integral part of Europe by joining the Common Market, this British good-will was sharply reversed by the manner in which de Gaulle slammed the door, in his usual cavalier and brutal fashion, on just such a possibility. His further acts of consistently upsetting any effort towards European unity and his manifest 'anti-Anglo-Saxon'\* attitude has made the English public anxious to reconsider their relations with France and try to understand just where their rather special position *vis-à-vis* de Gaulle went wrong. It is my hope that this book might help, in some small measure, by filling in certain gaps.

Now, after the lapse of time during which most of the men who played key roles in the events I describe have written their own accounts of them, it has been an absorbing task to re-read these works and relive a period that in spite of a constant feeling of inadequacy and often discouragement, at the time, I now realize was a thrilling two years.

In reliving after twenty-five years these wartime French North African days I am struck by the fact that French North Africa no

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\* A term often used by de Gaulle referring to the English speaking world collectively, but strangely enough invented by Hitler for the same purpose

## PROLOGUE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

longer exists. All these countries—Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria—in that order, have thrown off French domination—the last and bitterest struggle being the seven-and-a-half-year war for Algerian independence. This book, like our mission, has to do exclusively with World War II and does not touch on the problem of nationalism in formerly colonized Arab countries, although in 1941–3 we were constantly aware of these movements under the surface.

In order to preserve the eye-witness, on-the-spot atmosphere of the original book no changes other than the correction of spelling errors have been made. Footnotes to the text have been added, however, and some new appendices, in the belief that they reinforce the theme presented. In selecting these I have taken advantage of information now available to me in the written records of the architects of these dramatic events—records which, incidentally, have shown me how little I knew at the time of the infinite planning and preparation that went into this mission, and how much, in the final outcome, was due to chance.



This first book of mine I wish to dedicate to my French friends and their compatriots in North Africa and France, staunch allies of my country, who during the blackest hours of history silently guarded their country's unity and served her true interests in resisting by countless means our common enemy.





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# Preface to the Original American Edition

*Washington, D.C., 1945*

I have written this book for three reasons: first, because as a very American American I love France deeply. I have had more chances than most Americans to know her in happier days and, during her years of agony, to see her colonial policies, personalities, and watch her rebirth. Secondly, I have tried to make this book a page of American diplomatic history—a sort of laboratory specimen of a period during which our diplomacy was, I believe, unsuccessful; because I think it is always instructive for a country to observe such moments under a microscope. My third reason is that it seems to me we must know more about our actual practical diplomacy if we are to have a foreign policy that works. After surveying the scene and the interplay of interests, I point out certain instances which I feel could have been handled with greater chances for success.

I have written this book as a private citizen during a period when I had resigned from any official connection with the United States Government. If in places I seem too critical, I can only assure my readers that my motivating spirit has been a constructive one.

The failures of personality I shall have to mention are brought out only because they illuminate some important problem or policy. Similarly the criticisms of Foreign Office operations are not founded on any anti-British feeling on my part. I am one of the people who believe that close ties between Britain and America are not only advisable but a necessity for both countries. I do feel, however, that the Foreign Office policies and practices during the period I record were far from being in the best long-range interests of Great Britain—just as many of our own diplomatic manoeuvres worked against over-all American interests.

Foreign affairs of the type discussed in this book are never an easy subject, especially when they concern democracies.

I am told that during a dinner with Marshal Stalin at Teheran, Mr Churchill rose to his feet and said: "I should like to propose a

## PREFACE

toast to the President of the United States who has steered the Ship of State through the stormy waters of partisan politics amidst the violent freedoms of democracy."

This violence, this complexity, we understand in our own country—and expect foreigners to understand also. Yet we are all too likely to think that foreign politics, especially French, are far too complicated for us. Democracies by their very nature are complicated. It must be this very complexity and the political indolence that comes over democracies in peacetime that explain that strange popularity foreign dictators have had with the American and British people. It is only necessary to reread the American press during the early years of Mussolini and even Hitler to be struck by the praise these men received for the so-called 'good' they were doing for their countries. In those days they had enthusiastic support from American public opinion—the same hopeful support we later gave de Gaulle. It would pay us better to try to understand foreign politics and foreign democracy, as we expect them to understand us. Yes, democracy is complex; only fascism has the deceptive façade of simplicity.

There are many misgivings in this book about the future of French democracy unless she has better leadership. I have based them on facts and with apprehension for the future of France—that key to continental Europe. For behind this detailed story of an episode in diplomacy lies a basic question. 'Will Europe become,' Paul Valéry asked in 1940, 'a little peninsula of the Asiatic continent, or remain a precious part of the earth, the pearl of the globe, the brain of a vast body?' The answer is important to all of us. Our North African and French adventure is another clue to that answer.

## American Adventure

From June 1941 until July 1943, I was lucky enough to have an inside view of one of the most dramatic chapters in American diplomatic history—our dealings with Vichy, with de Gaulle\* and with the French generally in North Africa. That story was intertwined with another—the secret development of our pre-landing underground, with all its E. Phillips Oppenheim atmosphere of mystery and intrigue in the Arab world and the Vichy world, its contacts with the Nazi agents in Africa, and its glimpses of the network of spies and political intrigue. Neither story has ever been completely or even accurately told. Both are important, I think, to Americans. They are case histories in diplomacy, and as johnny-come-latelies in the international world we know all too little about how diplomacy actually works.

We hear a great deal about the big issues, a great deal about the interplay of the top personalities. The smaller drama I happened to see played out in North Africa explained and illuminated something else: the manner in which broad international policies are actually implemented and worked out by diplomats on the scene. As a witness to this drama, I came to realize something I had never suspected as a private citizen: the way in which Presidential and Congressional policy can be distorted and even reversed as it filters down through the State Department and the hundreds of embassies and consulates, as it encounters the apparently inevitable differences of opinion between the different government agencies, and as it is misunderstood or

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\* As General de Gaulle is mentioned so many times in this book I think two descriptions of him are appropriate, given by General Sir Edward L. Spears and his wife, both of whom knew him from the day he arrived in England. In fact General Spears was responsible for bringing de Gaulle to London on 18 June 1940, the day of his famous speech broadcast from London. General Spears was responsible with de Gaulle for building the Free French Movement with the backing of the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, an intimate friend of General Spears. (See Appendix I, p. 243)

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misinterpreted by public opinion at home. Good policies, I gradually realized, are not enough. We need to know as much of the actual mechanisms of diplomacy as we know of the structure of a corporation or of a government bureau in Washington. Otherwise our international policies will be unrecognizable by the time they have been handled by the long line of personalities between the Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee and the young Third Secretary in some far-off legation in a dimly known land. Until we, as citizens, know the diplomatic world as we know the business, military and governmental worlds, until we choose and support our diplomats as carefully as we choose and support our generals and admirals, our diplomacy will continue to be defeated as it was in North Africa, and as it was in our final wartime dealings with France.

To say that we were defeated diplomatically in North Africa and in our French policies generally is, I realize, a strong statement. It is a statement, however, that is privately made by many leading American officials, and by all of the numerous liberal Frenchmen with whom I have discussed this entire story. It seems almost incredible, in retrospect, that the most powerful country in the world, girded with military might and holding every card in the pack in the early stages of this diplomatic game, should have fumbled, misplayed and thrown away its political, moral and diplomatic strength as we did. It was a sad but instructive drama that I saw played out under the hot African sun.

Our original difficulty was perhaps unavoidable. We went to North Africa to do one job—a basically military one—and were forced into doing another, a diplomatic and political one. In the traditional American way we wanted to keep hands off French politics, to let France, like other nations, work out her own political salvation in her own way. We succeeded brilliantly in the military job we originally set out to do, but we found ourselves in the meantime hopelessly and almost helplessly submerged in a witch's brew of international intrigue and internal French bickering. And while we hesitated and fumbled we allowed Gaullism—which most of our top leaders recognized at the time as an extremely dubious political movement—to become, to all outward appearance, a shining anti-Nazi crusade. We allowed de Gaulle himself to assume supreme and dictatorial power over the destiny of France.

While England pursued a line that was at least vigorous and considered in British interest, we were swayed by a dozen hesitations

## AMERICAN ADVENTURE

and divided by a sharp difference of opinion in Washington as well as in North Africa itself. Our attention was concentrated on the military aspects of our job. Our whole American hands-off-foreign-interests tradition was strong. We simply did not realize in time that we were allowing American prestige to fall to something below zero in both Africa and France, and long-term American interests to be frustrated and betrayed. If our traditional friendship with France is today clouded and strained, it is because we awkwardly and grudgingly allowed de Gaulle to come to power. If de Gaulle still represents liberalism and patriotism to many British and American citizens, it is because neither the British nor the American Government ever frankly told their people the inside story of our dealings in North Africa and in London with de Gaulle.

I first came into contact with this drama in the spring of 1941. The Army and Navy were recruiting men to act as observers in North Africa, under the terms of the Murphy-Weygand Accord. When a Navy friend of mine told me of the project, I left my job at the Harvard Library to volunteer. It seemed—as it was—a chance to do something for my own country, for the anti-Nazi cause and for France, where I had worked from 1937 until 1940.

This Murphy-Weygand Accord was the first fruit of our much-criticized relations with Vichy in the early days of the war. It was negotiated in North Africa between Robert Murphy, then Counsellor of our embassy at Vichy, and General Weygand, the recently appointed General Delegate of the French Government in North Africa—a new post created by the Vichy Government. Under it we promised to ship to French North Africa substantial, though not lavish, amounts of coal, cotton goods, petroleum products, binder twine, tea, sugar and other much-needed commodities.\* The French promised in return to allow a reasonable number of American observers to act as ‘control officers’, scrutinizing the shipments carefully from the time they were unloaded until they reached the ultimate French or Arab consumer. This was necessary, of course, in order to ensure that the French lived up to the second part of their agreement: their promise that they would not export these or any similar goods from North Africa.

The Murphy-Weygand Accord was immediately under heavy fire from both the American and British press and from the British Foreign

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\* See Appendix II, p. 246

Office.\* Our own press saw in it a sort of appeasement of Vichy, and a possibility of strengthening the Axis war machine through bootlegged American goods. The British were still in the darkest phase of the war and understandably afraid that their most potent weapon, the European blockade, might be weakened by any American exports to North Africa. They were increasingly mistrustful of the French, and refused to believe that the Vichyites in North Africa would abide by the terms of our agreement. Even after they were somewhat reassured by our promises to keep a strict watch on every shipment, the British remained dubious about the whole venture. They even viewed our group of control officers with considerable distrust, and apparently considered their presence in North Africa a sort of economic infiltration into a British sphere of influence. From the start, therefore, our North African venture was clouded in international misunderstanding and confusion.

President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hull actually had very good and definite reasons for the Murphy-Weygand Accord but they were not reasons that could be stated publicly in the early months of 1941. No one explained them to me when I first volunteered, in Washington, but I later realized their validity in North Africa.

The first reason was a psychological one. At a time when the democratic world was uneasy about France we wanted to show the French people as a whole that we kept an abiding friendship for them and that we believed, in spite of all appearances, that they remained our friends at heart. Our second reason was strategic. Our shipments to North Africa were an early part of what later came to be known as economic warfare. The Germans had promised the North Africans that Germany could supply all their needs. The Nazis were never able to carry out even a small part of this rash promise. Our goods, therefore, made a profound impression on the needy French and Arabs, and won us much friendship and prestige.

Our third reason was purely military. Well aware of the Axis menace to our own safety, the President and our top military leaders wanted to keep observers in strategic posts in North Africa, which was

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\* As the latter were against this Accord because it meant breaking the British blockade, perhaps this is why, in England, rumours that the Germans were coming through Spain to take Gibraltar and Morocco were so easily believed

a sort of whispering gallery for every military rumour, near the Libyan battlefield and constantly in touch with the French homeland. If the Axis menace to us increased, North Africa was also our best line of battle against its aggressions. Through North Africa we could defend Dakar and West Africa, and beyond them South America. Through North Africa we could attack Axis armies in the Near East and eventually liberate southern Europe. It was a key point in our whole system of defence. The British lifeline passed just north of it; Gibraltar was across the way, Malta and Suez to the east. Warring ships and submarines constantly circulated off its shores and Germany drew many materials of war from its rich fields and mines. It also contained a potential weapon of great importance: scores of thousands of French soldiers who had been disarmed under the armistice terms of 1940.\* If they kept their faith in the anti-Nazi cause, they could be re-armed to help in the final battles.

Our North African strategy, founded on our Vichy strategy, actually made our whole military problem enormously easier when war came. But in 1941 few people outside of what Washington calls 'the highest echelons' seemed to realize this. Few outside the inner circle of diplomacy knew the violence with which American and British policies diverged, or the reasons for President Roosevelt's desire to keep close, if critical, relations with Vichy. This misunderstanding made our job in North Africa much more difficult. We had little backing from anyone at home during the early stages of our work. Even in the State Department itself there was much difference of opinion about the whole North African adventure and, almost up to the time of the 1942 landings, a feeling in the Department itself, as well as in other Washington agencies, that the whole thing was a mistake. The general public felt uneasy about our activities, and definitely uncomfortable about our Vichy policy as a whole.

The British policy with Vichy was, on the surface at least, a much easier one to justify. As we saw it develop in our daily dealings with the British representatives in Tangier and their secret agents in French

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\* 'The General (Weygand) had more than one hundred thousand trained soldiers, airmen and sailors under his command with a potential reserve of two hundred thousand more, but they could not even plan an offensive for lack of equipment.' From *Diplomat Among Warriors* by Robert Murphy, Collins, London, and Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1964

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North Africa, its general tendencies were quite different from our official ones, though close to what many Americans felt.

After France fell in 1940 Britain viewed her late ally with suspicion which was widely shared in America. Even before the period of all-out collaboration that followed Laval's return to power the British were cynical about Vichy's sincerity and unwilling to believe in any promises made by the French. Long-accumulated complaints dating from the twenties and thirties played their part in the mutual and growing dislike between the British and the French. Each country felt badly let down after the military debacle. Each had a long list of grievances against the other. France resented the long-term British refusal to back her in a 'strong' policy against the Germans after World War I, and what seemed to her a half-hearted participation in the early stages of World War II. She complained that the British Expeditionary Force in 1940 was not only small but ill-equipped. England, on the other hand, was embittered by what she thought was too easy a capitulation to the Nazis, the French refusal of Churchill's offer of joint nationality with the British, and Vichy's alacrity in working out a *modus vivendi* with the Nazi conquerors. As Britain held the lines alone this failure grew to the proportions of treachery in the British mind, and the British Government genuinely feared that Vichy would enter the war on the German side and hand over French colonies and the French fleet.

The French fleet became an almost morbid preoccupation with Anglo-American diplomacy during those unhappy years, and we felt the resulting repercussions later in North Africa. Both London and Washington discussed it so much with Vichy, and scolded Vichy so much about it, that you would have thought, as one correspondent remarked, that it was our own fleet which the French had somehow managed to steal from us. Our own Navy had not reached its present magnificent strength and Britain's naval power was stretched to the utmost; her very existence hung from a perilously thin supply-line of ships. Though the French Government gave its word of honour that the fleet would not pass into German hands, neither Washington nor London felt easy about it. British unease culminated in an episode that left a bitter residue of anti-British feeling in North Africa, and confirmed the numerous Vichyites there in the cynicism and chauvinism we later found so trying. A British fleet took action against the French fleet at Mers-el-Kébir, a French naval station near Oran, in July 1940, and some 1200 French sailors were killed. Whether or not



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this rather impulsive action was justified, the results in both Algeria and Morocco were deplorable for the Allied cause. Many of the sailors' families lived in North Africa, and Mers-el-Kébir was publicly memorialized and remembered for years afterwards.\*

As the British pursued this all-out anti-Vichy policy they made and strengthened connections with the French military underground. I was surprised to discover, in North Africa and London, something that was never clearly explained over here: the fact that this military underground had no original connection whatever with de Gaulle. It was formed by the French Army and started almost the day the armistice was signed. It had its own G.H.Q., its own organization, and its own channels of communication with the British. It was not until 1942, when the British decided to channel nearly all relations with France through de Gaulle, that he had any official contact with this original resistance movement.

In the midst of this vigorous anti-Vichy line of action, however, the British made at least one effort to work out some sort of compromise with Vichy. A basis for an understanding was actually drawn up

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\* 'In his memoirs, Churchill makes out the best possible case for the British action at Mers-el-Kébir, showing that he was more determined than anyone else to use force against what he considered an imminent menace. But it is my own feeling, based upon reaction which I witnessed in Vichy then, that General de Gaulle, in his memoirs, more accurately estimated what he calls this 'lamentable event'. After examining the evidence presented in the Churchill account, together with all the postwar revelations in France, de Gaulle concludes, as I did at the time, that the British attack was unnecessary and cost much more than it gained. Perhaps this was the most serious mistake of the war, because it simultaneously undermined the influence of the pro-British moderates in Vichy and de Gaulle in London.

'Indeed, one of the chief victims of the British naval attack was de Gaulle, whose campaign to organize French resistance from London was thus abruptly checked before it had fairly started. Representative French politicians and officers who were preparing to go to England to join him were so outraged that they gave up the attempt.'—MURPHY, *op. cit.*

With hindsight there is no doubt that Mr Murphy's opinion is quite correct. However, I do not agree with it because, at that point in the war, British weakness and unpreparedness were such, particularly in relation to naval power and shipping generally, that I think, in view of the suddenness of the French decision not to continue the war, that the Prime Minister and his Government were entirely justified in not leaving in any doubt such an important factor as the future action of the French fleet

between the two governments.\* These negotiations were later used by Pétain in his own defence, and were instanced by Pierre Flandin to justify his having entered the Vichy Government. The idea was proposed by an emissary from Vichy, Professor Louis Rougier, and drawn up by him and Sir William Strang at the Foreign Office in October 1940. The original text shows corrections in the Prime Minister's own hand. It was merely a negotiation and never became a treaty as it was not signed or implemented, partly, at least, because of opposition from the same General Weygand who had signed the Accord with Robert Murphy. With a military man's approach he argued that Britain had no chance of living up to her military terms unless and until the United States entered the war. But these negotiations remained a symbol of the fact that Britain still hoped to strengthen Vichy resistance to Germany. Her differences with our own Vichy policy may therefore, as one observer pointed out, have been more apparent than real. We ran into opposition from London only when, as in North Africa, we seemed about to break the European blockade, or when, later, we diverged from Foreign Office policy with de Gaulle.

This policy was the last line of British action in dealing with France. She felt around at once for a French leader who could produce a warmer climate of friendship between the two countries. At one point, as will be seen later, Churchill toyed with the idea of bolstering up the French pretender, the Comte de Paris.† But the British finally fixed upon a sometimes enthusiastic, sometimes exasperated, support of General de Gaulle. In the early days after the fall of France he stood out as a courageous and dynamic figure, a refreshing sight to democratic eyes after the venality and timidity of Vichy. As with many other historical figures, his faults were not at first apparent. He was given all the facilities of the British Broadcasting Corporation, and soon became a symbol, to French patriots, as well as to the democratic world, of the enduring spirit of France. By the time Mr Churchill fully realized the anti-democratic, totalitarian tendencies of Gaullism, the General had a deep hold on British as well as exiled French hearts.

While the British fought Pétain, tried to reach a *modus vivendi* with his government, and groomed his successor, we followed an entirely

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\* See Appendix III, p. 247

† After de Gaulle's abortive Dakar raid, Churchill was certainly looking for some French leader with more authority than de Gaulle

different policy. Our underlying idea, in Vichy as in North Africa, was to keep diplomatic relations with Vichy just as long as possible, so that we could observe what went on there, intercede whenever possible for the democratic cause, and keep American influence high in France, to counteract Nazi manoeuvring. Our policy was, I learned from our diplomats, a triple-barrelled one. From a strictly military standpoint, we wanted to be able to move freely in Unoccupied France and in the colonies, using them as listening posts and also creating and strengthening our secret military contacts. From a political standpoint, we wanted, while the British used force and the threat of force, to use moral and economic arguments to keep Pétain from all-out collaboration. While the British scolded, we cajoled. Our North African economic agreements were the most dramatic of our attempts to keep Vichy from swinging wholly into the Nazi camp.

Finally, we had a third reason for our Vichy-North-African policies. This reason was more permanent and profound. We wanted to keep traditional American-French understanding and friendship alive. We wanted to show our friendship for *all* Frenchmen, whether they had been able to escape to the outer world or not, and whatever their brand of politics. Though we never condoned Vichy's policies and, in fact, openly and consistently criticized them, we did not condemn any Frenchman who sincerely thought they represented the best solution for France. We said, in effect: 'We know that you are under tremendous pressure and are doing the best you can. We know France so well that we know that only a tiny minority of Frenchmen could ever be pro-Nazi. In spite of outward appearances, we, your old friends, have faith in you. If you honestly think your Marshal Pétain is doing his best for France, if you honestly think he is anti-Axis at heart, we are not going to interfere or condemn. While you are in prison like this we shall stand by and keep in close contact with you. We shall strengthen you in any way we can.' We believed, in short, that all Frenchmen were potential allies, and treated them accordingly.

Though this Vichy policy of President Roosevelt's had looked extremely dubious from Cambridge, Massachusetts, I soon discovered its wisdom and far-sightedness when we reached North Africa. There is simply no question in the minds of people who were in North Africa during those trying years that Mr Roosevelt's 'appeasement' made our military job enormously easier and quicker. Rightly or wrongly, millions of men and women in France and especially in North Africa

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preserved an almost mystic faith in Marshal Pétain throughout those years. In North Africa the Pétainists formed an overwhelming majority. No attack on our part could have shaken that faith; the British attacks merely confirmed and strengthened it.\* They were not unpatriotic or pro-German, those Pétainists: in our two years in North Africa, we met almost no pro-Nazis. They were simply blindly, idolatrously sure that Pétain was wisely and skilfully preserving all that could be saved of France. No one could sway that belief; they had to discover its erroneousness for themselves. Our patience with them, our enduring friendship, did much to keep totalitarian poisons from seeping into many misguided French minds. We proved to them that they had strong, loyal friends on the democratic side.

Like almost all Americans I was pro-de-Gaulle and inclined to think all Vichyites must be traitors when I volunteered for the North African assignment. I was also deeply and gloriously ignorant of the job we were assigned to do. I did know France, had many friends among British and French political and military figures, and spoke French without too much of my original South Dakota accent. I had lived in many parts of England and Europe, and knew something of the Arabs from archaeological trips in the Near East. But North Africa was a closed book to me.

I soon discovered that my fellow control officers knew little more than I did. Though some of us felt, often, that the professional diplomats we encountered in North Africa were fumbling and bureaucratic, we were ourselves no shining example of what the representatives of a great power should be. Plucked from banks, stores and other business backgrounds, and picked largely for our knowledge of France, we were a heterogeneous and sometimes confused group. Though we secretly saw ourselves as Scarlet Pimpernels, serving American interests in a strange and dangerous world, we had an obstinately naïve suburban touch. Our success in North Africa, which was considerable, was due partly to Robert Murphy, who stayed on there to carry out his agreements with General Weygand. He handled his oddly assorted assistants with consummate skill. It was partly due, too, to the fact that the cards were stacked in our favour. American prestige was very high

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\* British action at Mers-el-Kébir, de Gaulle's Dakar expedition and his anti-Pétain, anti-Vichy broadcasts only made Frenchmen in France anti-English, anti-de Gaulle and paved the way for their becoming even more pro-American

in North Africa in 1941 (it dwindled sharply later) and the Axis was heartily loathed by French and Arabs alike.

Still, our entrance into North Africa in the summer of 1941 was an inexperienced and unprepared one, and our whole performance there was ominously prophetic of the political and diplomatic fumbling we have apparently continued in Europe. Our awkwardness, as control officers, was not entirely our own fault. Though the Army and Navy selected us, we became part of the State Department's Auxiliary Foreign Service—non-career vice-consuls—presumably to be trained by them. Actually, no one gave us any training or indoctrination at all. There was an almost reckless confidence about the way in which our Government projected us onto the international scene armed with nothing more than a knowledge of French and good intentions.

When I went down to Washington to get my instructions, in the spring of 1941, I expected to find someone in the State Department in charge of training our group of amateurs. I thought we would be given a course in North African history, politics and culture, and some instruction in diplomatic techniques and procedures. To my amazement, I found that no one in Washington seemed to know much more about North Africa than we did. What maps existed in government files were antiquated and inadequate. There was a 'post report', also rather out-of-date, in the State Department files, describing Morocco and Algeria for the benefit of future consular officers, but it dwelt almost entirely on what seemed to be a singularly unhealthy climate and intolerable health conditions. Morocco was said to be damp and unwholesome (which it most certainly was not in my experience) and the inhabitants were described as suffering from diseases ranging from malaria to bubonic plague. Other Washington governmental departments could report only that the communications system in North Africa was reputed to have broken down, and that the railroads were disrupted and petrol not to be had. As far as the political situation went, we were told merely that it was black. The Germans were said to be infiltrating all Africa, disguised as tourists, via Spain and Spanish Morocco. They were reported to be planning a *coup* in North Africa, and popular opinion was that we would find ourselves in Nazi hands soon after we arrived.

We did learn a little about our specific job. We found that we had both a disclosed and an undisclosed mission. Our more publicized job was to keep an eye on American shipments, check them at the port

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of entry, and follow them into every little Arab bazaar to their ultimate consumer. We were also to make sure that no similar goods were shipped out of North Africa. Our secret job was a more dramatic one. We were to be undercover American agents, acting as observers and organizers for the Army and Navy. We were to appraise the military and political situation, make friends with Arab chiefs and French officers, and set up contacts that might be useful to American defence. Later on, we were also—though we did not know this in 1941—to gather a great deal of highly secret military information in preparation for our landings.

Finally I flew over, the last of a dozen of us, who dropped like so many Alices into the African wonderland. By midsummer of 1941 we were ready for two years of adventure, spying, political manoeuvring and international intrigue almost incredible to Yankee minds. After our years in banking, selling, and other sober American pursuits, we found the world of diplomacy, in the strange North African air, a shifty and shifting business, and seldom what it appeared from the outside. We had front-line seats for two years at one of the most curious and important diplomatic dramas of our time.

## Innocence Abroad

The first glimpse of Casablanca was disappointing to my adventure-seeking eye. It could have been almost any seaside resort in California or Florida. The city was neat, white and shiny under the hot blue African sky. Our white consulate, overlooking a little square set with geometrical palm trees, could have been a Federal building in Miami or Jacksonville. Even inside the impression persisted, because I found our consular staff in the same state of anxiety and confusion that I had left in Washington.

Our Casablanca Consul General, H. Earle Russell, a friendly and well-meaning career man, had not been told that I was coming and was obviously far from glad to see me, though he tried hard to be his agreeable and pleasant self. I was the sixth of this new series of non-career vice-consuls who had been suddenly, and mysteriously, dropped in his lap by the far-off gods in Washington. It was obvious at once that Mr Russell and his career vice-consuls were upset. They seemed to share the feeling of almost the entire Allied world about the much misunderstood Murphy-Weygand Accord, and the State Department had made no effort to pave the way for our appearance. We found everyone in the consulate in a state of dismay and agitation over our very existence. We were an unnecessary disturbance to their already confused but nevertheless traditional operations. They were afraid of what the Germans might do, and had already had a bad reaction from Vichy officials on the scene. They felt (with some justification) that a lot of amateurs were being sent in, to implement a policy they did not approve in the first place. From the very beginning, we encountered a fatal lack of unity and co-ordination in American policy abroad.

The whole Consulate was full of a strange atmosphere of nerves, panic and a sense of haste. The staff warned us not to be conspicuous. Mr Russell warned us not to do anything other than learn to code and decode messages. We must not, he said, arouse German suspicions

further or make trouble for the Vichy authorities in Morocco. Chances were we could stay only a few weeks anyway before the Germans forced our withdrawal. We must certainly stay within Casablanca. In fact, added Mr Russell, we had better stay within a few blocks of the Consulate itself. If we tiptoed and whispered, if we assumed the very colour of the plaster Consulate walls, the Germans might simply not notice that we were there.

This atmosphere of division and dissension surrounded our entire North African adventure during the next two years. Beginning with Mr Russell and his staff in those early days, we lived in a constant state of suspicion, misunderstanding and distrust. No one loved us, and we were not always too confident of ourselves. We knew what we were doing, or thought we did, and were sure that Mr Roosevelt and the Army and Navy were extremely anxious to have a job done, but we could never persuade other people of our validity. There was an almost universal feeling in the democratic world that we and our mission symbolized a truckling to the forces of totalitarianism, and were tarred with its brush. Our side in general wanted no dealing with Vichy or its works. They could see in the Murphy-Weygand Accord only a compromise with the forces of evil, and did not realize that it was a series of oblique moves on the military chess-board.

This criticism, freely expressed in the Anglo-American press, actually helped us in the early days. It gave us sort of a 'cover' with the Germans. Later, however, we discovered it had done so much towards misinforming and prejudicing public opinion that a true understanding of the later political issues became extremely difficult if not almost impossible. Large sections of the State Department, and, later, other wartime Washington agencies,\* remained unconvinced about the whole North African scheme until military action started.

In spite of this misunderstanding and distrust, we non-career men felt that the career men in Casablanca should play a more traditionally American role in launching us on our work that summer of 1941. We wanted a little more of the John Quincy Adams and John Jay spirit, a little less civil-service caution. We didn't yet know North Africa,

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\* 'The British never did resolve this conflict between the objectives of different governmental agencies, and our official agencies in Washington tried to outdo the British in fighting against each other. In this sense these bureaucratic quarrels created more trouble for me later than the Germans did.'—MURPHY, *op. cit.*



but we did know the French, and we knew that they admired enterprise and courage, and needed tough assurance to help them get over the deep-grained inferiority complex that grew like a cancer after their defeat. Later we learned that the Arabs admired these qualities even more. We also knew that German experts agreed that the way to treat a Nazi was to stand up to him. Above all, we knew that Americans had a unique weapon: we were the only country that still kept its extra-territorial rights in Morocco, and while it might be bad diplomacy to use those rights, it would be good diplomacy to let the French know we were fully aware of their existence.

Under a series of agreements made directly with the Sultan of Morocco, we could circulate freely in his realm and exercise certain definite and unique legal powers. Though the United States had formally recognized the French Protectorate, our relations were in theory exclusively with the sovereign state of Morocco. Except as an act of courtesy, we didn't even have to ask French permission to go anywhere we chose in Morocco. Finally, and aside from everything else, this diplomatic caution of our Consulate was a direct betrayal of our understanding with Great Britain, who had only agreed to the breaking of her blockade on condition that we should watch the movement of every piece of American goods through the Moroccan bazaars and into the hands of the ultimate consumers. We could hardly do this from the United States Consulate, or even from inside the port of Casablanca.

Feeling utterly frustrated, I settled down in the Consulate and devoted myself to re-studying the maps of Morocco and the data available about it on the spot. The maps were sketchy and tantalizing in their emptiness. Later, I was to see almost all those empty spaces for myself, and fall completely under their spell.

Morocco is one of the few authentically unspoilt countries remaining in the world. It is the most independent, vigorous section of North Africa. Tunisia, the easternmost part of North Africa, is more oriental than Algeria or Morocco, more influenced historically by empire-builders of all races. Even Algeria, with its rich coastal Mediterranean lands, has a long history as a colony of various great powers. Its lands have been developed and exploited for many centuries, many of its people corrupted and degraded. But Morocco, lying on the Atlantic, away from this stream of Mediterranean conquest, has remained comparatively untouched. Its climate, though hot, is swept by Atlantic winds on the coast and is very dry but not too enervating

inland. A rather superior and enterprising type of Arab lives in its lowlands; and a proud, warrior race of Berbers, only lately subjugated (the last tribe in 1934), inhabits the high and wildly beautiful Atlas Mountains of the south and west. The French have done as good a colonizing job here as any white race has ever done anywhere. Arab cities have been preserved, while shining modern French cities have been built beside, rather than within, them. Arab and Berber culture and arts have been preserved, too, together with a shadowy but apparently fairly satisfactory simulacrum of their original political pattern.

The great expanse of fertile soil in Morocco, as well as this country's strategical location, makes it the most important of French North Africa. A vast mountain range shelters it from the withering heat of the Sahara sands. In the foothills and plateaux are still to be found occasional magnificent trees, remnants of long-since-vanished forests. In the northern plains are extensive Roman ruins excavated under French auspices to prove to the Moroccans the priority of Latin civilization.

There are two distinct divisions in the physical character of Morocco—the fertile north and the more barren south. Within each of these divisions are two climates—one along the coast always temperate and agreeable, another inland, nearer the desert, with stinging summer heat and winters chilled by the nearby mountain snows and ice.

The capital of the north is the ancient town of Fez, built by the Arab conquerors, and today one of the most perfectly preserved medieval towns in the world. This white city lies in the fold of a green valley between the Rif mountains to the north and the Middle Atlas to the south. Its rich population and beautiful mosques, towers and white palaces, all topped with emerald-green tile roofs, are concentrated into a small area between crenellated white walls. The mosques and universities make this city the spiritual and intellectual centre not only of Morocco but of western Islam. Situated where a river rushes out of the earth, Fez is filled with a constant sound of rushing water, a music unique in Morocco.

To the west, on the Atlantic coast, is the French capital city of Rabat, built around one of the ancient sea-ports of the fierce Barbary pirates. In this delightful colonial town the French Protectorate Government is installed in a series of modern villas, white with green tiled roofs of Moroccan inspiration and architecturally most successful.

Here, next door to the French Resident General, lives most of the year His Shereefian Majesty, the Sultan of Morocco, in a snow-white palace that is a fantasy of odd-shaped windows, balconies and terraces set far back in a green field.

About fifty miles to the south, on the coast, is the commercial capital—Casablanca—built a generation ago on a plan drawn by Marshal Lyautey, the great French colonizer. It is the one great seaport north of Dakar on the Atlantic African coast, and because it is newly built is the cleanest city in North Africa, without the air of decay that hangs over most of the towns.

One hundred and fifty miles inland is Marrakesh, the largest native city of North Africa. This orange-red city, built in a palm oasis at the foot of rocky snow-capped peaks rising in breathtaking majesty from the flat barren plain, lies like a 'desert flower thrown over the wall of the Atlas'. Scores of mosques rise above its extensive walls, but the greatest monument of all is the splendid rose-coloured tower of the Koutoubiya Mosque, a masterpiece of the ancient glory of Islam. It dominates the town against the ever-changing background of the mountains and serves as a symbol to the Arabs of the former grandeur of their civilization.

Into this city pour every day thousands of Berbers (Morocco, particularly the south, is predominantly Berber) from the mountains and the desert. They come on horseback, camelback, donkeyback, in motor buses, and on foot to trade and gossip in the market place. The fathers and ancestors of these men have been warriors through all recorded history, fighting for the French against the Germans, in the Civil War in Spain, and long before in the Roman legions of Augustus and Pompey. In the bazaars of Marrakesh they show themselves a physically strong, friendly, gay people like most humans who live close to nature under a hot sun.

But the differences between the north and the south, the coast and the interior, do not mean that Morocco is a divided country. As in all of Islam there is here the binding cement of the Mohammedan faith, as well as a strange atmospheric unity.

That July of 1941, however, our interest in Morocco was neither atmospheric, historical nor geographic. What concerned us all was what the enemy would do next. I began to ask questions around Casablanca. I soon learned that there was no unusual German or Italian excitement, and that, contrary to the reports in Washington,

there were no German 'tourists' in Morocco. The Germans had an Armistice Commission, composed of about two hundred officers and men. Their official function was to check on all French military installations, equipment and personnel, and see that the North African Army made no attempt to re-arm. An Italian Armistice Commission had originally had charge of this work but some months after the British-Gaullist attempt on Dakar the Germans had taken the job over from their allies, in the early spring of 1941, not trusting Italian efficiency. There were also some Axis representatives with a not-too-clear diplomatic status in North Africa. Their main job was to remind the highest authorities that France was a beaten country and to keep an eye on the place generally.

None of the Axis authorities seemed to be particularly excited about the presence of a handful of new American vice-consuls, and there were no further Germans or Italians in evidence anywhere. The local French authorities, I learned too, had had no protests yet about us from the head German Armistice authorities at Wiesbaden. Obviously, they intended to let the Murphy-Weygand Accord be implemented. In spite of this French officials implored us to stay out of sight. Our knuckling under to these timid French bureaucrats seemed even more unnecessary than I had thought. We grew restive and anxious to begin our work. Time, we thought, was short. We little dreamed we had years, not months, ahead of us, and we lived under the fear of a sudden German crackdown.

Under this sense of strain everyone's temper grew short, and we began our diplomatic career ignominiously with one of those childish and utterly unnecessary office brawls, in which the amateur group of control officers got itself hopelessly and absurdly involved in a point-less warfare with one of the professional diplomats. North Africa's climate is intense, and the atmosphere there is quasi-oriental. The place produces an unexpected gift for gossip and intrigue in the most normally sensible Americans, who find themselves acting like Arabs in no time at all. By the time poor Robert Murphy turned up in Casablanca from his main headquarters in Algiers, things had reached a state in which we were communicating pompously by note and generally behaving like a group of burnoused Arab politicians in the *couloirs* of the Sultan's palace.

It must have been a dismaying moment for Murphy, arriving to take command of his little underground army of diplomatic sleuths,

only to find us behaving like the inept amateurs we were. We could hardly have looked like people with whom you could do a job of checking on the simplest shipments, let alone setting up a spy system and gathering military information. Murphy proved at once his enormous flair for handling people. He was relaxed, friendly, witty and efficient. Without taking sides, without hurting any feelings, he managed to let us see how childishly we had behaved, and we resolved our differences in a sort of mutual shame. Never, by a word or a look, did he let us know what he must surely have thought about our initial performances as the representatives of a great power. Our morale miraculously revived. We also discovered that, thanks to Murphy, we could now come out of hiding and go to work.

I got to know Robert Murphy very well indeed over the next two years and my liking for him never wavered. He was already a centre of press criticism at home, so I had been curious to meet him. I suppose I had visualized a cold, impeccably correct character, the Talleyrand of all this dealing with Vichy. I saw a tall, thin, strongly-made, but loose-limbed man, who looked younger than his age, which must have been fiftyish at this time. He was clean shaven, with the peculiarly white Irish skin, and a shock of blond hair over clear, blue eyes. In personality he was anything but the 'stuffed shirt' he was depicted in the press. He had a gaiety that brought out gaiety in others, a tremendous gift for friendship, affections that were almost too easy-going and warm. He wanted to, and was inclined to, believe the best of everybody. He was, I found, a devout Roman Catholic, and something of his deep faith seemed to be reflected in the loyalty and liking he showed towards acquaintances, colleagues and even the men with whom he negotiated.

The things for which Murphy was criticized in the liberal press were, paradoxically, almost the opposite of the few faults people on the scene might have found in him. They pictured him as one of the 'cookie-pushers', a socially elegant reactionary, even a fascist. He was none of these things. Born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, he came from a family which was bog, rather than lace-curtain, Irish, and his successful career in the Foreign Service was based on sheer merit, not on social connection. He would have done equally well in any field he chose. His father had worked on the railway, and Murphy himself earned his education in very humble and American ways. He served long years of apprenticeship in the prosaic and far from social consular

service. He was called into the diplomatic end of the Foreign Service by our then Ambassador to France, William Bullitt, who handpicked him as Counsellor of Embassy in Paris. Far from being pro-Nazi, he had good personal reason to detest them, aside from any ideological aversion. His wife had been rudely treated by some arrogant Nazis when he was stationed in Germany, and the resulting dispute had caused the German Government to ask for his recall.

On the other hand, Murphy's faults passed equally unrealized by his critics. There was no question in the mind of some of his warmest admirers that his very gift for friendship sometimes betrayed him. Though he had a hot Irish temper, which came in occasional lightning flashes, he was in general too indulgent, too loyal, too fair-minded, in a way, for a diplomat, whose main job is after all to sell a national bill of goods. Sometimes some of us wished that the lightning of his Irish temper would flash oftener when he had to deal with particularly slippery Vichy characters, and that he would be more tough-minded with the people who eluded, outwitted, or betrayed us after the landings in North Africa. His qualities of charm, generosity and friendliness were undeniably useful, however, as we planned and organized our African underground. His likeable personality, his gift for making friends, his executive skill, and his great capacity for hard work were invaluable at a delicate time, and he served his country well and showed great judgement at a time when thousands of American lives might have been lost by fumbling diplomacy. The storm of criticism that raged around him in the American press was equally surprising and painful to Murphy, conscious of his own sincere and successful attempt to execute our official pre-landing policy.

When he had quieted the tempest in the teapot of the Casablanca Consulate, Murphy set to give us our special assignments. We were, as I have said before, an oddly assorted group for such a crucial military job. Harry Woodruff and John Utter, two bankers who had lived in Paris many years, went off to Tunisia, the easternmost outpost of French North Africa. (Utter was, I think, the bravest man in Africa: he suffered an interminable series of boils, sheer torture in that humid climate, and no one ever heard him complain.) Woodruff, dark and poised, spoke French like a Parisian, which counted for a great deal with the expatriates with whom we negotiated. In Algiers Murphy placed John Boyd and John Knox. Boyd was a richly accented Mississippian who had managed the Coca-Cola branch in Marseilles

before the war, a man with great humour and a gift for friendship. Knox, slim and greying, had followed schooling at Groton with a most unusual education for an American—some years at St Cyr, the French equivalent of Sandhurst. Two businessmen, Ridgeway Knight, brought up in France, an ex-Cartier salesman and wine merchant, and Leland Rounds, went to Oran. A sophisticated yet sincere, witty and rather Elizabethan adventurer named David King; a construction expert from New York, Stafford Reid; a California oil man, Sidney Bartlett; and a young, energetic lawyer, Franklin Canfield, remained in Morocco. Frederick Culbert, an Annapolis graduate, and long an American expatriate in France, joined us later from Dakar, after Canfield resigned.\*

All these men played a major role in our North African activities, with the exception of Canfield, who shortly resigned, and Sidney Bartlett, who left somewhat before the landings. With all our inexperience, we had some early successes as well as making more than our quota of mistakes; and we had adventures enough to satisfy anyone. Some of our mistakes were political, and therefore dangerous; some were personal, and merely food for the constantly grinding mill of North African gossip. They were all miniature examples of the way the human element will frustrate the shrewdest international plans.

One of us, for instance, fell madly in love with a singularly flamboyant young French woman who passed herself off as an innocent young girl. He proposed to marry her on the spot, over the articulate protests of almost every American in sight. It was revealed, at the last moment, that the lady had not only some connections with members of the German Armistice Commission, but was already married to a Frenchman at Dakar, who arrived in the nick of time to save her from bigamy.

Such romantic complications, fortunately, were rare, and we never, incredibly enough, ran into personal violence or had valuable papers stolen. One reason for this immunity was that Mr Murphy insisted

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\* Of the original Vice-Consuls Harry Woodruff is dead, John Utter is secretary to H.R.H. The Duke of Windsor in Paris, Ridgeway Knight stayed in the Foreign Service and was recently American Ambassador to Syria and presently American Ambassador to Belgium, and Franklin Canfield works for the Standard Oil Company in London. The others I have seen from time to time but I do not know exactly what they are doing

that we work in pairs. He didn't want us to have to leave the diplomatic bag if a car broke down, or put ourselves in a position to be framed either by the Germans or the Vichyites. But we did find ourselves, throughout our North African experience, in a spider's web of espionage and counter-espionage. Our wires were always tapped; we learned to talk in an elaborate conversational code, and often filled in gaps with American slang. We had nicknames for the main characters with whom we had to deal. We learned that everything we said not only circulated by conversational grapevine all over North Africa, but ended up, carefully itemized, and usually totally inaccurate, in the *dossiers* kept on us by the Vichy secret service. At first, especially, we said too much. It seems to be hard for Americans, the most outspoken people in the world, to realize that the spoken word can be as dangerous as the written word.

By the time Mr Murphy sat down with us to assign a special job to each, I knew exactly what I wanted to do. I wanted to work directly with the Arabs, rather than the French. I was already fascinated by the drifting, shifting Arab world I saw even in the modern city of Casablanca, an eternal human tide flowing endlessly around the precise little islands of French civilization, and seeming wholly indifferent to it. Part of our consular control job was to check in the jostling bazaars (or *souks* as they are called in Morocco) on the way in which our goods reached the ultimate Arab consumer. Part of our political job was to sound them out, as we sounded out the French military men in their lonely inland posts, and the French bureaucrats in their offices. This didn't mean, of course, that we proposed to play politics with the Arabs. We had no intention of making trouble for the French. Whatever our private opinions, as Americans, about imperialism, we were in North Africa as guests and really as allies of the French people in all but name. We were not there to preach democracy or independence. We were there to find out what the Arabs really thought about the Axis and about the democratic nations, what sort of propaganda swayed them, how much the Axis infiltrated and corrupted the Arab world, and how receptive that world would be if American action were ever necessary in Africa. As I watched Arabs ride endlessly by, their dark faces looking withdrawn under their voluminous headdresses, or peeked through gateways into Arab palaces, I was consumed with interest in these people and curiosity about their thoughts and ways.



When I asked Mr Murphy if I could have the Arab assignment, he was delighted. 'I've been waiting for someone to offer to do that particular job,' he said. 'If you can persuade one of the other control officers to go with you, go ahead.'

After some argument, I finally convinced Canfield that working with the Arabs would be even more interesting than working in the French world, and we started out on the most fascinating assignment I can imagine. With Canfield, for two months, until he left, and then alone, I drove through nearly every village in Morocco, chatted in the *souks* with all sorts and kinds of Arabs and Berbers, visited the medieval mountain castles, called *kasbahs*, in the Atlas, and drank endless cups of mint tea with Arab princes in their palaces. It would have been interesting in peacetime. It was intensely so, as we crossed and recrossed the path of the German Armistice Commission, and tried to elude the watchful eyes of the Vichy secret service. We knew almost nothing about the Arab life, little enough about Morocco itself, when we started. But slowly, like a negative in a chemical bath, the picture of that strange world filled in before our eyes.

## French Morocco: The Shadow of Lyautey

Our whole diplomatic drama with the French was played out against this exotic and little-known background in North Africa. I have always felt that many of the complications we got into there, complications which affected our historic relationship with France, were due to the sultry, intriguing, socially backward atmosphere of Morocco and Algeria. It was an atmosphere which made personalities seem over-important, which produced fantastic plots, and led to petty personal bickering of all kinds. And the extremely Tory flavour of the French colonials had another untoward effect. It made it necessary for us to deal with people who were politically and even personally unpalatable to the American and British public and to us as well. This seemed inexplicable to the people at home, largely unaware of the ingrown, conservative, plot-ridden *milieu* of North Africa.

For these reasons the Arabs and the colonial French, and the North African land itself, are important to any understanding of the way in which we suffered our diplomatic defeat with France. We were ill-prepared to deal with them because of our general American ignorance of this strange part of the world.

Morocco was a peculiarly interesting place in which to observe French colonial techniques. As we make the post-war world, we shall hear much debate about British and French imperialism and about colonial trusteeships. I had always read and heard a great deal about the British colonial methods, but French ones, as far as I know, have been much less publicized. The French approach is quite different from the British. It has its own virtues and its own faults. Like the political and social atmosphere in North Africa, French imperialism also affected our whole diplomatic history with France.

I was surprised, at first, as I set out to explore the native world, by the ease with which France seemed to be controlling Morocco. There was a nationalist group there, calling for independence, to be sure, and many Arabs were flirting with or actually in the pay of Germany and

even of Japan. But there was no real revolt, and this seemed amazing in view of France's utter prostration in 1941.

I soon discovered that this quiescence, like the remarkable calm during World War I, was due to two things: to certain traits in the French and Moroccans themselves, and to the heritage left by Marshal Lyautey, one of the greatest of all colonizers.

Modern Morocco is Marshal Lyautey. His great figure, his proud head and magnificent moustachios and his resplendent uniforms, will dominate that land for years to come. Lyautey conceived his 'drop of oil' policy when stationed as a young officer in Algeria. Under this adroit policy the armed French built a fort and established themselves in hostile Arab country. Then they laid in great supplies of green tea, sugar, white cotton cloth, lamp oil, candles, and the like. The fort soon became the best trading station for the natives. Now, Arabs would rather trade than eat, and the Arabs near the fort soon grew accustomed to dealing with Frenchmen and came to depend upon them. When relations were firmly established, a military column would go on to establish another post deep in unconquered territory. In other words, French influence spread like a drop of oil on water. From time to time, it was met by resistance from mountain tribesmen aroused to action by some half-mystic, half-warrior *marabout*, or saint, but these episodes were unimportant compared to the smooth, continuous, civilizing infiltration of the French.

Politically, Lyautey believed French power should be exercised within the framework of Moorish civilization. He had a deep and genuine respect for Moroccan traditions and the Moslem religion from which they spring. He understood better than anyone the Moor's tremendous nationalistic pride, and the paradox of his strong democratic spirit yet accepting a feudalism darker than anything in the European Middle Ages.

To the Moors, the sovereignty of the Sultan is supreme from a religious as well as a temporal point of view. Under him, in the shape of a pyramid, is a feudal organization made up of the Grand Vizier and lesser viziers controlling the judiciary, the schools and other branches of the government. The pashas administer the government in the cities; the *caïds* in the country districts. As an instrument of political control, the Marshal simply kept this Moorish government, or *Makhzen*, intact. Over and above it, he placed the French Residency, as arbitrator and controller. The Resident General signs all the *dahirs*,

or edicts, of the Sultan, and, in practice, of course, is the absolute power in Morocco. Still, the Sultan remains in apparent dignity and in genuine magnificence.\* On all levels of the native administration there are corresponding French ones that aid, supervise and control. This system, while it might seem a mockery to us, somehow satisfies Arab pride.

Another astute political move of the French Government was to see to it that the businesslike, sedentary Arabic-speaking people on the Moroccan plains should keep their own system of laws and customs, while the wild Berber tribes in the mountains keep their entirely different one. This policy of *divide et impera* infuriates the nationalists but serves its purpose with the mass of the people.

Marshal Lyautey's perception of Arab feeling was both delicate and profound. He refused, for instance, to allow any Christian to set foot in a Mohammedan mosque, and Morocco is the only North African country in which this rule is still scrupulously observed today.

Lyautey also believed that the French should govern largely through the Army. The Moors are traditionally warriors; they respect and understand Army minds and ways. The Office of Native Affairs is still almost entirely made up of young French Army officers. Army control had another advantage: it made it possible for Lyautey to rebuild Morocco using Army funds, which were not under the direct supervision of the *Chambre des Députés*. Strangely enough, France's most successful empire building has been carried out almost in spite of the Government in Paris.

Everywhere, as Lyautey pacified, he rebuilt. 'A workshop,' he said, 'is worth a battalion.' As he subdued each feudal chieftain in turn, he built roads in that district, ploughed fields, and encouraged native industry. Matting from Salé, embroidery from Fez and Marrakesh, rugs from Rabat and the south, began to find markets in Paris. All ancient buildings and monuments were classified, studied and restored. Schools, clinics and hospitals opened; the old Moslem universities were rebuilt, and new ones founded.

Lyautey died in 1934, but the French administrators who have

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\* This was true in 1953 when Resident General Guillaume arrested and exiled to Madagascar Sultan Mohammed V for refusing to adapt so-called 'reforms' infringing on Moroccan sovereignty demanded by the French. His courageous resistance won full independence for his country. Deeply loved by his people, he returned to his throne in 1955 and died in 1960. He was succeeded by his eldest son, the present King Hassan II

followed him have been careful to follow the trail he blazed.

Unfortunately, the last French leaders in North Africa reflect the basic tragedy of France: her lack of competent leadership. For France, as General de Gaulle and Marshal Pétain have agreed, lacks men, in quantity as well as quality. Her population began to drop more than a century ago, long before that of the rest of Europe. Her whole economy was thrown out of gear by the defeat of 1870. World War I bled the country of her best leadership. The French who remained had less urge than ever to colonize. This accounted in large measure, I felt, for the slackening of integrity, the decline in ideas and creativeness, of the French Moroccan administration after Lyautey. The pervading influence of the Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas, one of the great 'interests' in France; the sly intrigues and timidity of the Residency, produced a situation that called for the best in diplomacy.

Yet the French administrators in North Africa kept some of Lyautey's admirable qualities. In the first place, the French are freer than any great nation of all traces of snobbery about 'natives'. There is no trace of condescension in their interest in Moroccan art and architecture, and they mingle with the Moors without that consciously broad-minded air that Anglo-Saxons and Germans cannot help using. The Moors feel and appreciate this. In the second place, the French are civilized enough to enjoy other people's civilization. They never, for instance, ruined native towns with chain stores or cinemas. Their own modern, gleaming cities were built at a discreet distance from the native towns, which were left intact. They paid native buildings, like native customs, the tribute of respect. The French sense of style, too, appealed to the Arabs, who love pomp, show, ceremony and riches.

A few incidents early in my Moroccan experience brought home to me the tenderness with which the French preserved Moroccan culture and the easy friendliness with which they treated the natives. They made me realize the strength of the French Empire. I was on a trip with two French officer friends in the Sous Valley. We had left Taroudant, lying at the head of this valley, and were on our way to Agadir. There is no more beautiful drive imaginable than from Taroudant to Agadir between the two snow-capped mountain ranges of the High Atlas and the Anti-Atlas, in a valley so rich it produces four or even five crops each year. The Sous River region, after the war, will certainly be developed by irrigation. In Elizabethan times it must have been even more fertile than it is today, because the entire

sugar supply for the British Isles once came from this relatively small region.

It was late in the afternoon, and we stopped in the shade of some olive trees to make tea and have some sandwiches from our tea basket. I had always heard of the cobras that lived in these woods in the Sous Valley; the Arabs catch them and charm them in the squares of the Moroccan towns, and I looked everywhere for them, with no success. While we were having our tea some Arabs came along on camels and stopped to chat with us. The two officers with me could speak Berber and asked them to join us at tea. As we did not have enough cups to go around the Arabs produced their own from their camel bags along with odd, mealy cakes and walnuts to add to our tea party. Some young boys, brothers or sons of our guests, who watched the camels, began to play acrobatic games, and I joined them to demonstrate, to their delight, how to walk on one's hands. Finally, after an hour or two of conversation, the little caravan packed up and started off up the valley. One of my officer friends turned to me and said, 'Now those Arabs will go all over southern Morocco spreading the startling news that they have met an American and that Americans must be civilized like the French because they also drink tea in the afternoon shade and like to chat and gossip with friends. The news will spread north over the Atlas Mountains, and all Morocco will know that Americans enjoy Arab talk and walk on their hands.'

In and around Agadir, which I also visited early, southern Moroccan life can be seen at its purest. In the future, Agadir will be one of the great ports of this country,\* since it lies at the mouth of the fertile Sous Valley between the rich mineral deposits of the High Atlas and Anti-Atlas Mountains. I am told that the word *agadir* means castle or storehouse, and modern Agadir is dominated by a formidable citadel-rock on top of which is an ancient Arab fortress. The coastline is made up of miles of shining beaches, which we later carefully surveyed as possible landing points for the American Army. (They were finally crossed off the list, one reason being that the ocean at this point produces a strange kind of tidal swell which would make landings dangerous.)

South from Agadir the road leads a bit inland to the beautiful oasis

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\* This city was destroyed by the great earthquake of 29 February 1960, in which some 12,000 people lost their lives

of Tiznit and farther on, to the last oasis to be reached by modern road, Goulimine. In this town you still see caravans of traders from the Sahara Desert. These Touaregs or nomads are known as the Blue Men, because of their indigo blue turbans and robes. Men of great stature, they are often veiled with the same blue material against the desert sun and sands.

Tiznit was a delight to me. Here I found a miniature Marrakesh without one vestige of European life, a pure Moroccan oasis built around a cool spring and clear pool. The French had preserved it as carefully as a French antiquity. One evening in Tiznit French friends took me to hear the music and see the dances of the famous dancing girls, or *Cherats*, of the town.

I was ushered into a small room with red walls, opening into a courtyard. We sat on a low couch facing four handsome Chleuh girls dressed in black robes belted at the waist, with a *djellabah*, or flowing robe, of thin white cotton material over the black. On their olive-skinned foreheads hung silver coins and around their necks were dog collars of blue, green and pink enamelled silver beads. Their heads were wrapped in many-coloured turbans over which they draped a short white shawl. On each side hanging from their shoulders over their breasts were large triangular plaques of silver, jewelled and ornamented, that served to hold in place the thin white *djellababs*. One candle lit the room and threw strange shadows on the walls. A Negro slave brought us mint tea to drink. As we sat facing the girls they would look shyly at us but we could never catch their eyes. They were always downcast when one tried. They held their heads high with great pride and dignity as they sat against the red wall, and there was never a trace of a vulgar gesture.

Suddenly the leader began to play on a curious primitive stringed instrument. As the strings squeaked under the motion of her bow the sound, strangely, was more that of a wind instrument than of a stringed one. One girl began to beat a copper kettledrum with two metal sticks. Suddenly two of the girls stood up and, adjusting their belts, began to dance. Their movements seemed slowly to breathe life into the music. The dancing was done almost entirely with their feet and their clapping hands, their heads and torsos remaining motionless. They faced each other like two little twin sisters and then turned quickly back to back, all the time beating the earth with their bare feet. The heads hardly moved but the feet persistently beat out the time and the motionless

bodies swayed as they moved back to back, face to face, and then without any warning made a quick-moving symmetrical procession of two around the narrow confines of the little room.

As they danced the leader played the stringed instrument and the girl beating the copper drum sang. The sound of the bare feet beating on the floor was like two more instruments added to this strange orchestra and the clapping of their hands accentuated the monotonous beat. Then, suddenly, the whole tempo of the music changed and became faster, almost like our swing music. The beating on the floor grew more persistent, the turns quicker, but still, in spite of the accelerated speed, the lack of movement in the bodies gave an oddly static quality to this otherwise animated dance. One had the impression of great dignity hiding passionate emotion. The room became almost oppressive with the beating of the drum and the feet, with the clapping of the hands and the singing, as the tempo was for ever quickening in these strange Chleuh dances.

After several hours of this music and dancing it paradoxically grew less monotonous. I had an odd sensation, like a vision, that here in the *Quartier Réservé* in this little oasis of Tiznit, was the shred, the tail end, of some ancient mystic tradition. Very distinctly the dancing more than the music seemed to have a ceremonial religious origin. The extraordinary dignity of these little Chleuh harlots with their flute-like voices made a lasting impression on me.

Outside in the dark street under the brilliant stars with the palm trees rustling in a cool breeze, I heard the music of their last dance. Standing there alone with all this space around me, the sounds of the music and the singing seemed to take on another meaning. Within four walls it had been too oppressive, but heard through the courtyard out in the street it seemed that this music had originally been born on the desert, under the sky, where its vibrations and the persistence of its ever-quickenning tempo could move off horizontally across the sands into limitless space with no walls to change its direction and intensify its monotonous beat.

I saw these *Cherats* again, much later after the Allied landings, when General Mark Clark, Mr Murphy and I went down to Tiznit with Resident General Noguès on an inspection tour of southern Morocco.

General Noguès, who was to play a big part in our dealings with the French in North Africa, was an ambiguous and interesting figure. He was trained by the great Lyautey himself, though he did not immedi-



ately succeed him as Resident General. He was an outstanding character in Morocco with his erect, trim, St Cyrian figure (which local gossip insisted was actually as well-corseted as it looked), his manner, which was crisply military in business hours and utterly charming in a *salon*, and his face, burned olive by the brilliant African sun, with its glancing eyes and its sudden, delightful smile. Noguès was an extremely able administrator, and a hard worker, keeping French prestige and influence high with his constant visits to every Arab leader in every town in Morocco. But he was more than politician-soldier. He was, in fact, a sort of African Vicar of Bray, holding to his job regardless of changes of administration. He had originally been appointed by Léon Blum's liberal *Front Populaire* government and yet stayed on very happily under the reactionary Pétain.

On the surface, in spite of this, Noguès seemed to be one of the Frenchmen upon whom we could count. He was far from popular with the intensely Tory landowners in North Africa, who loathed Léon Blum and anyone connected with him, and General Weygand himself had told a friend of mine a year or so after the armistice, 'When the moment arrives, you can count on Noguès.' At the time of France's defeat, Noguès came nearer to continuing the war against Germany from French North Africa than any other colonial figure. He was unquestionably able. Yet there was something about his supple personality that should have warned any American not to trust him.

Noguès was our first example of how fatally easy it is for Americans to ticket people, especially foreigners, into 'good' and 'bad', of our national tendency to divide the world into Our Team and the other team. Actually, the world, especially the diplomatic world, is full of people like Noguès who are not in any team but who play their own obscure game. Noguès was very human, and very African. In that shadowy land, full of complicated plots and undercurrents, we shortly discovered that most of the whirlpools seem to centre around the Residency.

From the moment our delegation of control officers dropped into Casablanca, Noguès was uneasy and irritated. He was annoyed at our mere existence, so inconvenient, so hard to explain to the Germans. He asked us to remain inconspicuous. He was afraid of demands from the German Armistice Commission to counteract this arrival of Americans. We, in turn, took to watching him. We saw him constantly play off the German Armistice Commission against the American

Mission, and vice versa. One day, he would use the threat of Arab uprisings to get special privileges from Vichy; the next day, he would demand more food from the Arabs for export to Germany with dark murmurs about German pressure on Vichy.

During Vichy's shameful period of anti-Semitism, he constantly exaggerated the Jewish problem in Morocco. The Arabs and the Jews have lived together in Morocco for centuries, and have worked out their form of a *modus vivendi*, a pleasant business relation tempered by an occasional Arab uprising, when the Arabs think the Jews have taken too high a percentage and look too unbearably prosperous. The rare cases of French persecution of Jews in Morocco brought no wave of approval from the Arabs who conveniently forget their own intermittent sins in that direction: on the contrary, they were contemptuous and angry. Actually, Noguès, like many Arabs, had intrigued so long that he had often lost view of his goal and seemed merely to practise his art for art's sake. Before and after our landings we were to see him try to make trouble among the Americans, and between the British and ourselves—and sometimes successfully.

The atmosphere of the French world around Noguès was one of strange unreality. Casablanca is a white modern town, glistening under an African sun. In 1941, it also had a flavour of Lisbon. Morocco was crowded to overflowing with refugees. Many of them, the tragic ones, were Spanish Republicans, and German Jews and Central European refugees, living miserable lives under the long arm of the Vichy government in Africa—lives that horrified us and many good French men and women I knew there, they were in such contrast to their country's liberal tradition. (We tried to remember, however, that the same France had taken these poor creatures in when the United States and other countries had refused them.) Then there were Belgian and Dutch refugees, faring better; and a large number of French men and women from occupied France, most of whom fared very well indeed.

Almost all these latter people had some reason for being in Morocco. They owned property there, or had relatives who did, or men in their family who had been soldiers in Morocco. Financial pressure brought them there, too; French currency at home was rapidly sliding to the brink of ruin. Liquid capital, from the world market point of view, decreased daily in value. Anyone who had capital, therefore, felt an irresistible impulse to buy some land in North Africa. The sum result was a sort of boom-town atmosphere in Morocco, crowded trains and

restaurants, great activity and an appearance of prosperity. Many of these French men and women were seeing their Empire for the first time; they were struck and fascinated by it, but they did not add any stability to the world with which we had to deal.

The men with whom we worked regularly, as Americans, were the French officials, Army and civilian, the permanent population in Morocco. Like most colonials and military men, they were conservative, intensely nationalistic, intensely parochial. People back home wondered audibly why we didn't find Gaullists or 'liberals' with whom to work. We worked, like everyone else, with what we had, and what we had were people who were French and patriotic to their fingertips but politically the equivalent of any group of stockbrokers in an exclusive Long Island club.

In June 1941, as anyone who was there can testify, North Africa was passionately loyal to Marshal Pétain. There were a few former intimates of Marshal Lyautey who knew of the disloyal way Pétain had behaved towards him at the time of the Rif War,\* but Lyautey had concealed Pétain's ignoble role from the public with a dignity true to the best traditions of the Marshals of France. Pétain, to North Africa, was the spirit of France, carrying on in an hour of darkness, mystically imbued with leadership, waiting his time to restore France. Just before we arrived, Pétain had forced Laval out of his Cabinet under dramatic circumstances, with the help of that very Marcel Peyrouton who was to be a storm centre after our landings. A story flew around North Africa that the Marshal had said: 'At last I have rid myself of that treacherous Laval! And now I can sleep at night.' The North African French hugged that remark to themselves: it seemed to prove that the Marshal was fundamentally true to the best in France and forceful enough to protect her. It was unfortunately to be his last such action; by the time we went to work in Africa, President Roosevelt had written a clear and explicit letter to Admiral Leahy, the American Ambassador in Vichy, explaining American policy: 'In his (Pétain's) decrees he uses the royal "we" and I have gathered he intends to rule.'† The truth about Pétain, however, had not percolated through to North Africa. He remained a hero to most of the local French.

The French with whom we had to work, both as control officers and

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\* See *L'Aventure Riffaine*, by Hubert Jacques, Berger-Leverault, 1927

† See Appendix IV, p. 250

in setting up our military contacts, were not only pro-Vichy: they were definitely anti-British. Universally they admired British courage during those terrible months of 1940-1, and the fact that Britain, after the fall of France, 'held the middle watch alone'. But three things conspired to keep anti-British feeling at fever heat. First came the unceasing and adroit German propaganda, aided by Vichy collaborationists, over the radio and in the press. This had a great effect. All the traditional differences and misunderstandings between France and England were emphasized and restated. Second came the still open and bleeding wound of the British attack at Mers-el-Kébir of 3 July 1940. A year later I saw a memorial service for the French sailors killed by British action at Mers-el-Kébir. *La Légion des Anciens Combattants* (a fascist-tinged Vichy organization) pulled out all the stops on the anti-British organ and gave it full value. Widows and families swathed in black were thrust into the foreground, wreaths of flowers were tossed onto the sea, and press and radio men were on hand to bring out every overtone and every painful implication in the ceremony.

The third item in this tragic anti-British feeling in North Africa was a parallel feeling against de Gaulle, whom they considered a British puppet. I was amazed, when I began to work in North Africa, to discover the violence of the anti-de Gaulle feeling there. Back in America, I had taken it for granted that all anti-Nazi Frenchmen must be for de Gaulle. In Morocco, I found the men who could most help us in any military action, men of the highest character and devoted patriotism, were more anti-Gaullist than they were anti-British. They never could forget that de Gaulle, a Frenchman, had taken up arms against his own countrymen.

The centre of de Gaulle's propaganda in Africa was, of course, Brazzaville, in French Equatorial Africa, where he had his radio station. From it he made his first important public statement—the famous Brazzaville Declaration of 16 November 1940.\* Though this statement was couched (significantly, as we realized later) in rather grandiose terms, using the royal 'we', it contained some admirable ideas. It promised, for instance, to uphold the French Constitution of 1875 incorporating the Tréveneuc Law of 1872. This law, which became a key point in the whole battle that raged later around Gaullism, was framed by the National Assembly to safeguard French constitutional

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\* See Appendix V, p. 254

government should France ever be occupied by an enemy. It set forth a definite plan to preserve French sovereignty for the people, and to restore democratic methods as rapidly as possible after any such occupation. This Brazzaville Declaration had very little effect in North Africa at the time, though it was later discussed a great deal when de Gaulle repudiated not only the Tréveneuc Law but the French Constitution.

The item that most weighed against de Gaulle in North Africa was the Dakar episode. It made such an impression on North Africa, and therefore on American plans there, that it is worth reviewing briefly. It coloured French thinking for years, and made it necessary, when we dealt with the North African French, to keep the role of our British allies completely in the background.

In the autumn of 1940 the British were looking desperately for almost any military adventure that might divert the Germans from the British Isles. General de Gaulle suggested an expedition to Dakar. Unfortunately he based his plans on completely erroneous military information. He assured the British that Dakar was full of Germans. This was not true; there were no Germans at Dakar.\* De Gaulle also assured the British that he would be welcome in the port, even though Admiral Muselier, head of de Gaulle's naval forces, was justifiably afraid of and opposed to the expedition. At this point an element of detective-story mystery comes into the whole episode. In the first place, the Dakar adventure was not protected by the usual military security; either through over-optimism or incompetence it was freely canvassed. In the second place, when the fleet reached Dakar, General de Gaulle, instead of landing himself in the full panoply of his prestige, sent underlings into the harbour to negotiate with the French Governor. Why? No one knows.

In any case, Governor Boisson refused to treat, and the expedition fizzled out. Whatever the reasons for the debacle, it was the first of many episodes that produced a growing British uneasiness about de Gaulle. Said a British Cabinet Minister to a friend of mine: 'If General de Gaulle had been dealing with any other people than the British, he would never have returned from Dakar alive.'

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\* One exception was a German businessman travelling on a French passport as 'M. Martin' who turned up there on the very eve of our own landings in North Africa

After the Dakar affair, in November 1940, de Gaulle was already trying to have his London organization recognized as the Provisional French Government. The British Government opposed this formally by a categorical note\* which was only published three and a half years later. The United States could not recognize two French Governments at the same time. Anyway, Mr Churchill urged that we continue to recognize Vichy, which we did.†

Dakar had many evil results. The first was that it made the Germans much more aware of the possibility of Allied action in North Africa. Shortly before the Murphy mission arrived they had removed the original Italian Armistice Commission in Morocco and replaced it by a more efficient German one, which set to work systematically to undermine the Allied cause and which progressively demanded more and more military concessions in Morocco. This, in turn, set the North African French even more against the British and de Gaulle, the inadvertent cause of the increased German pressure. All through North Africa, too, Dakar gave Frenchmen a horror of what they called 'commando raids'. They were afraid that when Allied landings came as they suspected some day they would we would not come in sufficient force. Any such abortive action would mean, they feared, that the Germans would move in completely on North Africa. Then their underlying, nightmare dread might come true, and Frenchmen might be found fighting as allies of the Germans, hopelessly and for ever divided. It was a direct result of the attack on Dakar that Frenchmen were arrested in North Africa when suspected of being too actively pro-Ally, for fear they might encourage another Dakar. And it was Dakar that made many Frenchmen, still haunted by the idea of an unsuccessful 'commando raid', resist our final landings.

This, then, was the political atmosphere of the French world in Morocco: anti-British, anti-Gaullist, mystically believing in the old Marshal at Vichy, and yet, incredibly as it seemed to our American eyes, patriotic, anti-Nazi and largely willing and even anxious to co-operate with us as we began to build an American underground in North Africa. It was a lesson to us, as Americans, in the complexity of the European psychology, in the danger of dismissing international

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\* See Appendix VII, p. 265

† This paragraph is added from the French edition of this book, *Le Dilemme France-Etats-Unis, Une Aventure Diplomatique*, Editions Self, Paris, 1948

#### FRENCH MOROCCO: THE SHADOW OF LYAUTEY

affairs in terms of large generalities. It was also depressing and yet challenging to discover that we could not work, as we had hoped, with an anti-Vichy, pro-Gaullist underground. That underground, as de Gaulle's Washington representative was later to inform the State Department, simply did not exist.

In the meantime, as we made French contacts we also made Arab ones. The Arab world was quite separate from this stormy French one. Slow, secret and persistent, it led its own life in *souk* and shadowy street, undisturbed, except economically, by the troubles of its European masters.

## Into the Moslem World

After Mr Murphy had assigned to each of us his part in the North African adventure, Canfield and I set off at once to explore this Moslem world of Morocco. Our assignment, we soon discovered, was the most interesting we could possibly have picked. We had to do what we wanted to do anyway—criss-cross the little-known country, get to know the dark faces under the softly draped burnouses, dine in the town houses of pashas and *caïds*, and visit their *kasbahs* set like medieval castles on the lofty heights of the Atlas Mountains. Through our Arab contacts we found we could learn much about Axis operations in North Africa. Through them, too, we discovered many interesting things about the relations between the European and the Moslem world. Later, our Arab friends were to be most useful to us in setting up our pre-landing underground and building a secret communications system that could have been useful had the German armies beaten us into North Africa.

One cargo of goods from America had already arrived before we set out on our first two-month swing around Morocco. As we drove we inspected village markets and gossiped with native chiefs. We carried with us lists of our imports; white cotton cloth (for shrouds, as it turned out—the Arabs said the quality was too poor for clothing), green tea, the national drink of Morocco, sugar, condensed milk for children, coal, petrol, fuel oil, binding twine, and sacks for the rich Moroccan harvest. All these products, but especially the petrol and oil, were, as I have noted before, severely frowned upon by the British Board of Economic Warfare, which was convinced that we could not keep them out of German hands. They worried us, too, but we felt—and rightly, as it turned out—that the gamble was worth taking because of the hope of keeping French and Arabs alike on our side.

Our journeys into the dark background of Africa soon taught us a surprising thing: that the natives knew much more about us than we knew about them. They knew all about us, in fact. Moors are natural



spies. They spend whole days moving around the bazaars exchanging news and gossiping. Long before we started checking our first invoice, each *souk* knew just what goods had arrived and where they were headed. Arabs who unloaded them started the underground telegraph system working, and word spread to the Atlas Mountains themselves as fast as the little Arab mules could trot. This native trait was a fine thing for our purpose: we used it later for our own pre-landing signal system, and it was invaluable in checking on enemy activities.

Canfield resigned a few months after we began this work and returned to Washington. By then Mr Murphy evidently considered I knew my way around enough to work alone, instead of with a partner as originally planned. I was deeply grateful for this trust because I did not want to discontinue my association with the Moors, and there was no one else who wanted to do this sort of work.

Arab psychology is a fascinating study to an American or European interested in the whole pattern of European empire-building. Much of what goes on in places like Syria or North Africa must seem utterly confusing to anyone who has not lived with Arabs and been in close contact with their subtle and indirect ways of thought. At first I was completely baffled by some of the conversations I had with them. As I carefully recorded my notes afterwards, I would find that my written record of the conversation was quite different from the *impression* I had of it. Sometimes it seemed exactly the opposite. I soon learned that this was because conversation with Mohammedans takes place on a series of different planes. There is an upper stratum, a surface, which to the casual observer seems the subject of conversation. Under this surface, there are often as many as four or five different planes, or subjects, on which the Mohammedan is communicating with you. They appear, glance, and retreat, or are only felt, like lights in a prism. It is on these planes that the real exchange of ideas is made. Communication with all Moslems takes place largely through the antennae of the mind. Again and again I found that I was right in my *feeling* of what some *caïd* was saying rather than in his actual words.

This love of communicating in a sort of mental chess game probably helps to account for the political inefficiency we constantly found among the Arabs. They talked politics a lot, and they seemed restive under French rule. They loved America and, like most unsophisticated foreigners, had a touching idea that we were all-good and all-powerful. They were critical of Europeans of all kinds. And yet they obviously

were making no concerted effort to throw off the European yoke, even when Europe was so preoccupied. Unlike that of the Hindus, their resistance movement was limited and not too important. Relative prosperity, of course, helped account for this fact: most powerful Arabs and Berbers were doing nicely in the wartime Moroccan boom. But their incurable tendency to dissect rather than implement their dissatisfaction seemed to me one of the main reasons why, since their final military eruptions under Abdul Krim in the twenties, they had been so passive under French control. I always liked the remark of an English friend of mine, Jessie Green, who had spent a good deal of her life being kind to the poor Arabs in Tangier. 'I could have more respect for them,' she said, 'if they would walk right into my house and cut my throat.'

Another trait that kept the Arabs relatively docile under French control was their indifference to yesterday and tomorrow. Though they cling to traditional ways of doing things, they neither remember nor plan consistently. The French colonizers soon discovered, for instance, that while the Moroccans are always building, they build out of the most impermanent materials and pay no further attention to a building once it is done. It was Edith Wharton who said that the Arabs and Berbers have a collective form of the artist's indifference to the finished product. Morocco is always crumbling into decay, like the sandcastles of a careless child, and it is built with the same divine negligence. Once I saw a Moroccan constructing an elaborate doorway for what was apparently to be a house. 'What sort of a house are you building?' I asked him. 'How should I know?' he answered. 'I haven't finished it yet.' The immediate past does not exist to a Moroccan, and the future is unforeseeable. If the national motto of Mexico is *mañana*, that of Morocco is *inch Allah*—if God is willing.

One of our main jobs among the Arabs was a study of the political influences being brought to bear on them. This was obviously important to us in any evaluation of North Africa from a military point of view.

Riding up to Fez one day on the train, I caught a glimpse of the amount of political pressure that was being brought to bear in this curious Arab world.

Sitting beside me in the train was a young Moor\* absorbed in an elaborately printed and illustrated book, written in Arabic. The

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\* This young man was later Moroccan Ambassador to Tunisia

printing looked conventional enough, but there was something very odd about the flavour of the pictures I could see. As Father Brown would have said, they were the Wrong Shape. I fell into conversation with the young man and learned that he was a professor in an Arab school at Casablanca. The book he was reading was a gift from the Japanese Consul there. It was a history of the Japanese Empire, illustrated with magnificent pictures of the Emperors and state ceremonies in a power and glory to delight the heart of any Arab. The young professor found the book intensely interesting, and said he had a profound admiration for the Japanese. In Mohammedan fashion, he was attracted by the long, unbroken tradition of the Imperial House, and above all by what he told me was 'a happy synchronization of religious ritual, governmental protocol, national habits, and the evolution of the individual'. I could see that in this case, at least, the Japanese were showing a very shrewd feeling for Arab psychology: for their love of tradition, ritual and power. The Japanese were obviously exporting more than cotton goods to Barbary.

German influence, too, was evident among the natives throughout Morocco, but here the happy Moslem habit of taking the cash and letting the ideology go was quite evident.

In Marrakesh, for instance, I met an extremely intelligent Moroccan who held high office in the local government. I saw him constantly, and enjoyed his friendship very much. He was the enormous, very dark son of a prince of the Royal House of Morocco and a Sengalese slave. Through his father, he was a direct descendant of the Prophet and therefore bore the title of Sherif or *Moulay*. This fusion of Negro and Arab blood is rather common and produces some remarkable results in Morocco. My princely friend was a delightful companion and always kind to me, but I had no illusions about his activities. With me, he always professed a touching loyalty to the Allied cause. His wife's family had played a very important role in Moroccan history and his father-in-law had been knighted by Queen Victoria. This fact he used to dwell on to me, as a proof of his deep fondness for England. By habit and education he was indisputably pro-French, and would remain so as long as France held the Protectorate power. At the same time, he was deeply attached to the Imperial family and Islamic traditions, and in his youth had been an ardent nationalist.

I soon learned from the Arab grapevine that he was in close contact with the German Armistice Commission and received large sums of

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

money from them. This gave me another reason for seeing him, and I was always interested in his eloquent condemnation of the Nazi ideology, methods and practices. He especially criticized German anti-Semitism because he knew they held the Negro in equal scorn. I could always tell what the Germans were up to and what form their propaganda was taking from a talk with him: not so much from what he said, of course, as from what he left unsaid, from his method of approaching a subject and from all those subtleties of Moslem conversation I have already mentioned. I knew, of course, that he went back hotfoot to the Germans with reports on me, and that fact had its uses when I wanted to fire a shot in my own small sector of psychological warfare. I realized, too, that he always believed that I was on the point of outbidding the Germans and offering him a sum of money appropriate to American power. I let him think so but, needless to say, never involved the United States in this exotic form of Lend Lease.

Nowhere in the world, I believe, is this sort of opportunism and lack of principle as prevalent as it is in the Arab countries. It is the quality that most disintegrates and destroys government, and I think it helps to account for the backwardness of Mohammedan countries, and their inability to play the part in the world to which their resources and density of population entitle them.

Like so many Arab faults, this opportunism was actually a help to us. It kept the Germans in a state of frustration as they futilely bribed and corrupted Arab leaders and then watched them pleasantly accepting the British gold that all Europe knows as 'the cavalry of St George', from the image of St George stamped on the sovereign. As a matter of fact, we were the only people who never bribed the Arabs and never had to. They freely gave us information and help. I had never fully realized before the extent of our prestige and popularity among the underprivileged of the world, the way in which the most ignorant and unlettered natives somehow knew that Americans were kindly people who asked nothing from them and would never join the long list of their exploiters. I saw the soundness of their feeling beautifully symbolized after our landings, when, on a lonely, dusty road, I found two Frenchwomen whose car had broken down. A jeep full of doughboys had stopped to fix the car, and I heard the Frenchwomen thank them profusely in broken English. 'Gee, ladies,' said one soldier with a friendly smile, 'that's nothing. We're Americans, and we *love* to help people.' Before the landings, the humblest Arabs were sure of that.

## INTO THE MOSLEM WORLD

With all their opportunism, the Moroccans were strongly attracted by anything ideal, anything wide and general and couched in spiritual terms. They are a curious combination of tough materialism and a constant yearning for the sublime. I had some missionary friends, for instance, in the little town of Demnat, in the foothills of the Middle Atlas. They were a young English couple named Kingston. Mrs Kingston had Bible classes, in which she read out loud from the New Testament to groups of Arab women, simple women who understood only their native tongue. (Even today, no Moorish woman can read or write.)\* She told me a remarkable fact: that during her reading the women would apparently pay no attention, gossiping and giggling together over their tea. Yet the moment she came to the actual words of our Saviour, they would stop talking, turn to each other and say with deep solemnity: 'That is the truth. Those are true words.' Like all the missionaries I ever talked to the Kingstons were totally unable to make any Arab converts but they were encouraged by Arab response to spiritual truths.

The Atlantic Charter struck this same chord of idealism in the Arab mind. It made a truly profound impression on them, and for months they hardly talked of anything else. I imagine they still discuss it today. The effect it had on the Arabs, the way it helped win them to our cause, cannot be too highly emphasized.

The Arabs also admired our apparently boundless power. This power clung like an invisible halo even to the lowly control officers. I could soon see why our small American group worried the Germans, the collaborationist French and even the competitive British so much. As we moved around the *souks*, or tracked down black-markets, or gathered news of shipments to Germany, we attracted as much attention as if we had been a thousand times as many Americans driving jeeps and tanks. The worried Germans and collaborationists thought we were disguised Naval officers, and the British feared that we had Singer Sewing Machines and Standard Oil contracts in our pockets.

Actually we stuck close to our three jobs. We kept an eye on American goods; we gathered all the information we could; and we began to lay the plan for a very nice pre-landing Arab underground, in case the Germans took over Morocco first.

Fortunately for my work with the Arabs, I was able to live in the

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\* This is no longer true. A great effort has been made to stamp out illiteracy and educate the women

sort of quasi-oriental splendour they enjoy and respect. When I went to live in Marrakesh, the winter of 1941-2, I was lent one of the show-places of the world, a magnificent and famous villa called La Saadia. It was one of the very few American properties in Morocco and belonged to the estate of a rich American. His widow very kindly allowed me to live there in her absence. Before this I had always stayed at lovely Hotel Mamounia, but numerous members of the German Armistice Commission stayed there, too, and made trouble for any Frenchman seen with me. Marrakesh, by this time, was overflowing with refugees, not only from France but from Indo-China and Syria. Housing was difficult to find, so I was doubly grateful for a chance to live in the inimitable La Saadia.

Since President Roosevelt and Mr Churchill, as well as countless other war leaders, stayed there with me, a note on La Saadia might have some historical interest. It is a stylized, modernized version of a south Moroccan *kasbah*, or castle. The thick walls are of pinky-red plaster; the single, spreading main storey is dominated by a high, sloping tower some six stories high—a tower from which Mr Churchill liked to watch and paint the Atlas Mountains. The two inner courtyards held famous gardens of orange trees, geraniums and bougainvillæa around black marble fountains, all indirectly lit at night to give a magical, undersea effect.

Inside the house, the rooms were panelled and painted in mint green, yellow and blue, with elaborate Moorish carvings and decorations, low couches, small tables and a vast baronial dining table. The bedrooms, each with its own huge marble bath, all different colours, were highly decorated with intricate panelling and low, wide beds. The one Mr Churchill favoured had a blue-tinted, arched recess for the bed, and I am told that the sight of that rubicund great man, working over his papers against that medieval and ornate background, was something unforgettable. Outside, and around the villa, the grounds spread out in banks of violets, petunias and other flowers around fountains and rivulets and a pool which, from the tower, sparkled like a square-cut emerald in the Moroccan sun. A vast terrace overlooked this Arabian Nights scene.

My head man in this enchanted castle, when I lived there, was a most extraordinary head servant who later followed Mr Murphy to his European post. Louis was one of the best-known characters in North Africa, and generals, ambassadors and admirals always remem-

bered him and asked after him. The son of a Syrian father and an Indo-Chinese mother, he was an oriental Admirable Crichton, efficient, imaginative and a czar in his own kingdom. No occasion was too much for him, and he basked in great occasions and the reflected glory of great men. When Archbishop Spellman arrived, Louis genuflected and kissed his ring as smoothly as a Roman; when the President and the Prime Minister visited he was the smoothly functioning (but humanly happy) *maître d'hôtel* behind the scenes. Educated at the Sorbonne, and veteran of the Foreign Legion, he was an intellectual as well as a military snob, and read enormously. He spoke perfect French, correct if stilted English and German, and a little Arabic. He had a large collection of birds in his room, where he could talk to them, was constantly getting engaged but never married, and had been the ping-pong champion of France. When I found him, he was a waiter in a cafeteria in Casablanca. Thanks to him, and the caretakers, La Saadia functioned smoothly through all the long procession of foreign agents, spies, American soldiers and aviators, visiting dignitaries and heads of state.

As I drove around Morocco, or entertained Arab and French figures with Louis's help at La Saadia, I began to suffer from the disease that afflicts all Europeans in North Africa. It is a disease that accounted for much of the trouble we had later in our diplomatic negotiations with the French and in the manoeuvrings around de Gaulle in Algiers in 1943. Something about those hot blue skies, the secret, gossiping Arab world, the sense of being far removed from northern civilization, makes Europeans and Americans as touchy and personal as the Arabs themselves. People soon become more important than issues; petty gossip takes the place of policy. The French historian, Taine, produced the theory of the influence on history of *le temps*, *le climat*, and *le milieu*. Both the climate and the environment in North Africa helped to distort our own diplomatic history there. We moved in an atmosphere of intrigue and plot, spies and secret agents. Some of these intrigues and plots were merely curious, even fantastic, to American eyes. Some of the later ones, like the dark manoeuvrings around Darlan, had their effect on history. Before many months had passed in Morocco, I learned that the most Hollywood-style melodrama could actually take place in North Africa. Like everyone else, I began to think in terms of personalities and I became intensely conscious of the miniature power politics in the African world.

## North African Plots

All through these early days in North Africa we learned the lesson that is so hard for Americans: that neither countries nor individuals are wholly black or white but some human, personal shade of grey. We could seldom classify people as wholly on our side and 'good' or wholly on the other side and 'bad'. Some of the people most passionately on the American side and most useful to us in our undercover work were very dubious characters by any personal standard, or indeed even by French political standards. Some of the most Vichyite characters in Morocco were fine, patriotic people. In the same way, our own representatives on the scene made some very dubious political choices, and our allies often took paths that were not only different from ours but cut right across our policies. We never sufficiently classified or enforced our policies either among our own representatives or with our friends on the scene.

Perhaps the most fantastic plot we ran across in North Africa, for instance, was produced by the British. This episode was the attempt of the Prime Minister, in the spring of 1941, to have the Comte de Paris—the Orléans-Bourbon pretender to the throne of France—issue a manifesto and rally the French to the royalist standard with British backing. The Comte de Paris was living a curious, semi-royal life at the time, in a large rented villa eight kilometres outside Rabat, surrounded by his numerous children, his blonde, royal Brazilian wife, and the remnants of a small court. We used to meet him frequently, an active, wiry little man, riding his bicycle around Rabat.

The British invited him to Lisbon in March 1941, where he went into conference with their Ambassador, Sir Noel Charles. A French agent had gone to London beforehand to establish a basis for negotiations with the Prime Minister. Luckily, the Comte de Paris discussed the project with a Frenchman who had a basic knowledge of the situation, and realized the danger of the plan. He persuaded the Comte to return to Morocco and abandon the undertaking. The British,



however, did not give up all hopes of a restoration, and the 'Pretender' again emerged from Moroccan obscurity at the time of Darlan's assassination at Algiers. This manoeuvring interested us because it proved something we already suspected: that the British were not wholly convinced that de Gaulle, who was not informed of this episode, would prove to be the best possible leader for France.

At this time, of course, we were more preoccupied with the Germans in Morocco than with de Gaulle and French politics. We didn't even realize yet what an overwhelming part Gaullists were to play in our final diplomatic defeat by France in 1943. The Germans were enough to absorb our interest in 1941. Like everyone else in North Africa they intrigued, but they did it in the German manner with a nervous sense of inferiority and a heavy hand, suspecting each other, apparently, as much as anyone else.

Herr Theodore Auer, the German diplomatic agent in Morocco (an illegal position to begin with under the terms of the Armistice), was a professional German diplomat. He acted unofficially through the German Armistice Commission, about 200 army men in civilian clothes. While they toured and inspected military installations he handled the political warfare. A man with a rather flushed face and sandy hair, he was the heir to the great Auer chemical works in Cologne. Like many of the Nazis he secretly admired the English, spoke English everywhere, wore fine English tweeds, and was obviously delighted when people took him for an Englishman. As usual, the German Government sent a sort of super-spy to spy on their own spy—a Prussian aristocrat who knew entirely too much about North Africa as a whole, but whose only mission, apparently, was to take a villa and keep a discreet eye on the Armistice Commission in general and Auer in particular.

The Germans, as it happened, were quite right in keeping an eye on Auer. He used to draw some of our diplomats aside and tell them in a whisper that he represented the 'better part' of Germany and regretted being forced to associate with the Nazi scum. Couldn't they, he suggested, arrange a passport for him when the inevitable moment came, help him disassociate himself from the Armistice Commission? Running across Murphy one day in Rabat, he seized him by both hands and recalled the days when they were colleagues in Paris before the war.

He also kept trying to meet me—why, I never knew, except that he

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hoped, no doubt, to glean some information from such an inexperienced American vice-consul. One day, a collaborationist Frenchman gave me a startling message from Auer. 'Herr Auer,' he said, 'wants you to know, M. Pendar, that he is a friend of yours, and regrets, because your two countries are enemies, he cannot see you. But he asked me to tell you, when the time comes, as man to man you can count on him.' I hear he was later beheaded by his Nazi overlords for his failures and indiscretions.\*

All this manoeuvring, typically North African, ended in an almost incredible lack of co-operation between American groups abroad. Herr Auer invited a young American career vice-consul to dine, and this vice-consul, after a pleasant meal, dutifully drew up a report of his dinner conversation for the State Department. When we read it, we could hardly believe our eyes. Herr Auer, it seemed, had said: 'These new vice-consuls of yours now, Mr X, they do not look like diplomats. To me, they look more like some of your Army and Navy officers in civilian clothes than consular officers.' To this our fledgling diplomat had replied, according to his own report: 'Well, Herr Auer, one thing I can tell you is that they certainly don't know the *first thing* about consular work.'

This episode was only one instance of the unnecessary trouble we Americans made for each other by a lack of co-ordination from Washington and our own lack of training and, perhaps, of basic sense of international self-preservation. The State Department couldn't be blamed for the many *naïvetés* and blunders of myself and my control-officer colleagues: we had been picked by the War and Navy Departments and more or less thrust upon State. But I felt that a Department more on its toes would have had men of its own with adequate knowledge of the French and of French colonies, trained and ready; or would at least have given our little group some indoctrination and talks with experienced Foreign Service officers. As it was, our whole effort

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\* This information was wrong. Auer stayed in Berlin where he thought he was safe as the Allies arrived because he was a well known anti-Nazi. However, he was captured by the Russians and was first put into a concentration camp and then spent some years in a prison in Saxony. He was finally liberated but only after his brother had paid some intermediary a large sum of money. He went back into the German Diplomatic Service and was appointed Ambassador to Ceylon until 1964 when, having reached the age limit, he was retired and returned to live in Bonn. He is now living in Munich

## NORTH AFRICAN PLOTS

was unbusinesslike and half-baked, and didn't merit the fair success we had. In a less friendly or more organized country than Morocco we would have been forced to leave.

Some of the trouble we Americans made for each other would have been funny in a less serious situation. We control officers, for instance, were so anxious to be capable international sleuths that we produced many of the prize rumours in that rumour-rich land, and it was a poor week when we didn't turn in at least one report of an imminent German invasion. (French and Americans alike had, as a matter of fact, a justifiable fear of a simultaneous Axis attack through Spain and Morocco to Dakar.) We also turned in lists of pro-Germans and collaborators, most of whom later proved to be among our closest well-wishers and friends. Then we suffered from an absurd sense of rivalry among ourselves, like cub reporters on their first beats. We jealously watched each other's pipelines among the French and natives, and were hair-raisingly indiscreet. A control officer would often, in conversation with a foreigner, repeat something that the foreigner had said in confidence to a second control officer. This rapidly brought us a bad reputation for talking too freely, and panicked some of our best contacts into silence. Most of this was due, I felt, to bad indoctrination and also to our old-fashioned American sense of careless power—the feeling we still have but must loose soon, that we are so much top dog that we can do and say anything we like.

We also, like the French themselves, suffered from a confusion of ideologies. There was certainly no agreement among us politically—a good thing, needless to say, in the representatives of a democracy—but there was unfortunately little discipline and little agreement on the reasons for the war and the way in which it should be fought. This came poignantly home to me in an episode with a young man and his wife, Jewish refugees.

They were, it is true, wealthy refugees with that name synonymous with Croesus in Europe, Rothschild. The wife had been married to a German and had managed to get out of Germany after her first husband's death by taking most of her large fortune, as the Nazi laws then demanded, converting it into cash, and pouring it bodily on to the desk of a top Nazi official. The remainder she left as a trust fund for family retainers, some of them very old at the time. One day, these refugees were obliged to go from Rabat to Algiers; the wife was so ill that the doctor forbade her to go by the small African train, more

crowded than any wartime trains in America. I offered to drive them, as it so happened that I was motoring there with some colleagues in a caravan of three cars. To my amazement, two of these colleagues pleaded with me not to do it. 'You know,' they said, 'how anti-Semitic many of the French are. It would be *extremely* tactless.' I knew, of course, many of the more social North Africans actually would not dine at a house when these Jewish refugee friends of mine were present. I made the trip, nevertheless. It produced one curious episode, typical of those tragic Nazi years.

At a restaurant where we dined, I suddenly saw the wife pale. She asked if she might change places with me. I discovered why when I sat down in her place and realized that I was looking directly at a table full of Nazis, only a few feet away. The one facing me had a singularly cruel, pasty face, the face of a 'movie' villain. Early the next morning, the husband came in my room. 'Alix could not sleep all night,' he said, 'because she was haunted by that Nazi's face, and this morning she suddenly remembered who he is. He is a dangerous Nazi, the son of a footman who worked for her mother for years and whom Alix is still supporting in Germany. Her family sent that man we saw last night through college.'

The French added their own element of confusion to the clouded North African scene. Soon after our arrival we found that General Noguès and his official family were extremely nervous about our presence. Part of our agreement with Vichy was that full publicity should be given to our shipments, both among the Arabs and the local French. Unfortunately, Germany by that time completely controlled the press back in Vichy, and Vichy in turn controlled Morocco. Noguès made less than the minimum effort to publicize the facts about the arrival of American goods. (This, of course, was a slap in the face for Germany, and one which the Arabs fully appreciated as they sent the news around by grapevine. Germany had asserted that she could take care of all needs. Actually, her total exports to Morocco while I was there consisted of a small shipment of nails, used to close the crates in which oranges were shipped to France and thence to Germany. And those nails weren't German; they were Swedish.)

We could understand why Noguès couldn't make the press cover the news of American shipments, but it was irritating to find, as Canfield and I did on our first trip around Morocco, that American cotton goods were not even marked 'Made in the U.S.A.' and that the

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local French had never been told of their origin. They believed the shipments were brought from Spain, or drawn out of old stocks already in Morocco. These cotton goods were particularly precious to the Arabs, since they lacked even the necessary minimum of clothing.

Noguès, as a matter of fact, hadn't wanted us to make our inspection trips at all, even though the goods had been sent upon definite assurances that they would be carefully controlled. When Canfield and I applied for permission to make our first trip, Noguès first wanted to forbid it altogether and then tried to delay it. There were, he said, entirely too many American vice-consuls travelling around Morocco. It invited the attention of the German Armistice Commission.

Yet Noguès was not pro-Nazi. French officialdom in North Africa was not all black, from our standpoint, any more than it was all white. The government took immediate and ingenious action against collaborationists, French or native. An agent of the French G2, for instance, lurked near the beaches around Casablanca where important Arabs used to meet secretly with members of the German Armistice Commission. He photographed them with a camera fitted with a telescopic lens. When the pictures were enlarged and the men identified, these Arabs were quietly removed to southern Morocco, where they would be out of touch with the Germans.

Yet, while we appreciated this adroit French resistance, it was irritating to have Noguès unwilling to go farther in living up to the Weygand agreements with us. Legally, no American citizen has to ask permission to go anywhere in Morocco because of the extra-territorial rights already mentioned. We asked permission of Noguès only because Murphy wanted to demonstrate our good will.

We were finally forced to use the peremptory tone that American diplomacy seldom—all too seldom—employs. When Murphy told Noguès that we intended to invoke our capitulatory rights if necessary, Noguès shrugged and yielded, sending word to his agents in the towns on our itinerary that we were to be received, but that they were not to hold any political conversations with us. Incidentally, these men at the same time received the only official word they ever had that American goods were coming into the country, and this was done only when General Noguès had checked our itinerary. Later I found that those officials who were not on our route were never told.

The importance of all our American shipments was, of course, largely in their propaganda effect, which was decisive, and in the

excuse they gave us for making friends with the Arabs. If all the goods had been trans-shipped *en masse* to the Germans, they wouldn't have made that mighty war machine grind perceptibly faster. Actually, I feel safe in asserting that none of these particular goods ever got out of North Africa. Plenty of Moroccan goods, however, did get exported. The German Armistice Commission, throughout the Russian campaign, used their military inspection trips to do some military marketing. They bought out native bazaars of every scrap of wool, in cloth or rugs, as well as of leather, copper and brass, in a desperate effort to supply their strained war machine.

Throughout our own control trips we checked railway stations, docks, and warehouses. We saw evidence of the great amount of food-stuffs that was being requisitioned and shipped out of North Africa, and French officers and officials were always ready to tell us of shipments we didn't see with our own eyes. Cobalt from the Atlas mines, used in making steel for armaments manufacture, and phosphates from the plains near Casablanca were also being exported. We ran across shipments of rubber on their way to France, and thence Germany, from Madagascar. (Vice-Consuls David King and Stafford Reid discovered these important shipments in the course of their inspection trips to the port of Casablanca.) The United States hadn't yet started preclusive buying. The French sabotaged this trade by loading, reloading and delaying the shipments in every way possible.

Though our own goods weren't trans-shipped, they did sometimes, inevitably, end up in the enormous African black-market. Some French officials were corrupt, and many Arab civil servants; they often released goods through illegitimate channels. But the Arab purchasers themselves were responsible for most of our trouble. They would genuinely and even desperately need five yards of cotton goods for clothing, go to the bazaar and buy it, and then discover that it could be resold for several times the original price to a black-market purchaser. This discovery was too much for human, or at least Arab, nature to bear. They would rather trade than be clad. Fez was the centre of this traffic, and as we threaded our way through its seething streets we used to wonder how much olive oil, how many yards of cotton goods, were hidden away in the walled houses of the merchants we passed. It was obviously impossible to check on such an intricate black-market superimposed on an intricate oriental native life, and we

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finally had to tolerate it as one of the many native evils we could deplore but not correct.

When we got back from our first two-month inspection trip, Canfield and I were full of ideas for improving our work in Morocco. We wanted our government to force more publicity on the economic aid we were giving North Africa. We even cut stencils to be sent to the United States for marking goods and crates in both Arabic and French. We wanted more funds for propaganda work. But we ran at once into the dissension on policy within the State Department at home.\* Some of this dissension was inevitable. The economic experts in charge of the shipments couldn't be told our ultimate plans because of military security. They were the butt of constant criticism from their colleagues while their superiors ordered the shipments to continue without explanation. While the top leaders in both England and America were whole-heartedly behind our North African policy, most of the British, influenced by Gaullist propaganda, were vociferously against our dealings with the Vichy French, and the State Department, under violent attack from the American press, had great difficulty keeping up the shipments at all, let alone backing us with propaganda or economic weapons. We were left to operate in a sort of half-world of our own.

As 1941 wore on, the political situation in North Africa grew darker and more difficult. The British and Gaullist action in Syria in June and July of 1941, coming only ten months after Dakar, caused still more division between the French in France and the French in exile. The Syrian invasion was so distorted by the Axis radio and the German-controlled Vichy press that the North Africans thought it was a grossly unwarranted attack on France's sovereignty, an attempt on de Gaulle's part to hand over a piece of the Empire to the British and to a small clique of pro-British Frenchmen. Some of them could see the urgency of the British need for air bases, but none of them could understand de Gaulle's participation. They could understand a call to fight the Germans, but not to fire on other Frenchmen, whatever their politics. De Gaulle had, in fact, signed an agreement with Mr Churchill soon after he reached London, stating:

*Article I—General de Gaulle will proceed to constitute a French force composed of volunteers . . .*

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\* See Footnote to p. 14

*Article II—This force will never be permitted to bear arms against France.*

Yet he had insisted that his soldiers should go into Syria with the British. The troubles the British and French forces had there among themselves were one of the major causes, as I later learned in Algiers and London, of the growing British suspicion of de Gaulle.

It was shortly after the troubles in Syria\* that de Gaulle gave an interview†—a very significant one—to an American journalist in Brazzaville, showing clearly his attempt to play off the United States against Britain. Official American reaction to this interview was so violent that René Pleven was ordered to try to patch things up in Washington at all costs, even to the extent of denying the propositions made in the interview.‡

Oddly enough, as de Gaulle and British popularity waned, ours actually increased. At first the French had naturally associated us with the British. We were backing the British, we seemed unable to understand why France could not continue the war, our press was violently Gaullist. At the start of our first inspection trip, we found both French officials and civilians a little touchy with us. Later, as the German oppression grew worse, and the French got used to the idea that we were working with them rather than undermining them in North Africa, they became increasingly friendly, even in the most Vichyite circles. But they continued to hate de Gaulle, believing more and more that Gaullism was a political rather than a purely anti-Nazi movement. Paradoxically many of de Gaulle's most violent enemies in North Africa came to be labelled 'Gaullist' merely because they were pro-British and pro-resistance. This fact was later very confusing to Americans coming to North Africa.

Over in Algiers, General Weygand began to have increasing difficulties with the Germans. This energetic man had secretly been helping us, and the Germans began to suspect as much. He had also rallied all the strange and sometimes shabby areas of French North Africa together, electrified the natives with his military dash and magnetism, and given all Barbary a new, strong devotion to France; a devotion the Germans didn't like at all. And it was at his command that the

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\* See Appendix VIII, p. 266

† See Appendix IX, p. 267

‡ This paragraph is added from the French edition





Kenneth Pendar—American Vice-Consul in Marrakesh



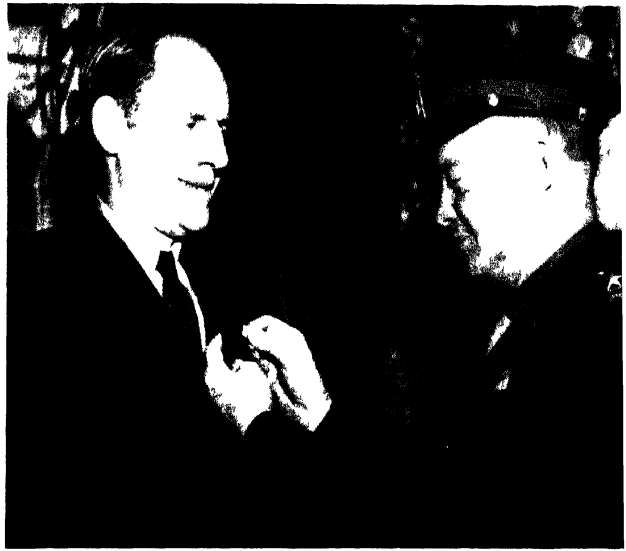
The author with El Glaoui and General Mark Clark



Sultan Mohammad V of Morocco

Distributing American cotton goods to Arab children

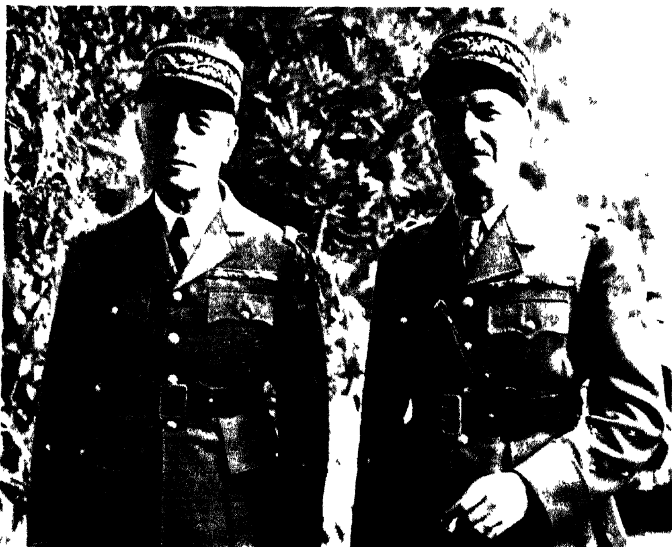




Robert Murphy being decorated by General Eisenhower

A diplomat and three Prime Ministers—Murphy with Eden, Churchill and Macmillan





Two of the principal actors in the drama of the Allied landings in Morocco—Generals Noguès (*left*) and Juin



General Noguès with the two sons of the Sultan of Morocco and the Admiral commanding the Casablanca fleet

## NORTH AFRICAN PLOTS

Intelligence Division of the French Army performed the really remarkable feat of photographing every document sent out or received by the German and Italian Armistice Commissions. This was done with the approval of General Noguès and probably explains in part why Weygand so misguidedly thought we could count on him.

Watching from Morocco, we were already afraid that Weygand would be recalled, particularly when General Huntzinger arrived, in the autumn of 1941, on his famous trip of inspection on behalf of Vichy. There is no question but that Huntzinger's plane was deliberately sabotaged by anti-Vichy Frenchmen. Unfortunately, his briefcase was found intact in the wreckage of the plane in which he met his death, and in the briefcase was the documentary evidence that Weygand had been secretly on our side.

Our collaboration with Weygand had been bitterly criticized in the democratic world. It did not, of course, imply any approval of his role in the 1940 armistice. The fact was that he held all French North African interests in his hands and was the only man we had to deal with in our negotiations. Unlike other Vichyites, too, he never wavered in his anti-German feeling or his belief in eventual Allied victory. The proof of this was the way in which he held fast against the Germans during the tragic Greek, Yugoslavian and early Russian campaigns, when Europe seemed ready to fall completely into German hands.

While all these intrigues and manœuvres went on, we continued our day-to-day job of inspecting shipments and gathering information, driving from market to market, talking to *caïds* and pashas, French officers and French bureaucrats, Arab fruit-growers and Berber shepherds. War clouds were darker all the time. As the autumn wore on, more and more of our native friends would say, matter-of-factly, 'After Ramadan\* when the Americans land in North Africa. . . .' 'But,' I would say, 'where do you get these silly rumours? You know surely that North Africa is always full of rumours you cannot believe. We are not even at war.' 'Ah,' they would say, smiling, 'that is true. Now, *when* the Americans land in North Africa. . . .'

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\* The Moslems' period of fast like the Christians' Lent

## Moors and Frenchmen

By the autumn of 1941, we had many good Moorish friends, and I was beginning to feel at home in the town houses with their veiled, oriental façades. I never quite got over, though, each time I visited one, that feeling I had of living in a Pierre Loti world. It seemed fantastic to be discussing German radio propaganda with dark figures in perfumed courtyards. We should have been gossiping over the latest crusade, or a batch of Christian captives.

The whole atmosphere of Morocco is theatrical, but you live close to nature there: ocean, sand, the mighty Atlas Mountains, rich plains and desert are your companions. The atmosphere is very clear, with almost constant sunshine. Even the Arab world, backward and often diseased as it is, has vivacity. Everywhere you see Arabs on mules, on camels, on foot, in buses, in trains, in broken-down cars, going and coming from the *souks*, sitting in doorways, endlessly talking, trading, laughing, joking. They are almost always dressed in white or grey, but they have a fantastic sense of colour. In the midst of a burnt-out desert waste, you suddenly see a man or woman dressed in sky blue, light pink, brilliant orange, bitter-lemon yellow, or mint green, like an unexpected exotic flower in barren land.

I saw a great deal of some of the key men in this Arab world as 1941 went on and we began to develop a large network of French and Arab contacts.

Perhaps the most important and interesting was Hadj Thami el Glaoui, Pasha of Marrakesh, and head of the tribe of Glaoua, a fierce band of Berbers in the High Atlas. When the French took over North Africa, there were three great southern Moroccan families: the M'tougi, the Goundafi and the Glaoui. Only the Glaoui were shrewd enough to realize the inevitability of French control. Today, El Glaoui, who, by a sort of osmosis, absorbed the wealth of the rest of his family, is a quasi-independent feudal lord of southern Morocco, a satrap for the French. El Glaoui's dark, aquiline face used to be a

familiar sight in Paris, where he had a superb house on the Avenue Foch; and he kept a wonderful combination of European and Moorish sophistication. He was equally fond of golf and of boar-hunting, and served cocktails and champagne to his guests along with Moorish dinners of wild magnificence. Like all Moors he loved to build, and often I would find he had added a garden house or a pavilion to his palace between my frequent visits.\*

I first met El Glaoui soon after my arrival in Marrakesh. I had already fallen in love with the town itself, the archetype of all medieval Moroccan cities. Into its great Place Djemaa El Fna pour thousands of Berbers from the High Atlas and Anti-Atlas, nomads from the deserts to the south, Arab farmers from the fertile plains near by. They exchange ideas, bits of news and gossip; they have their heads shaved under the wicker canopies of the itinerant barbers; they have scribes take down any writing they wish done, applaud the young Berber dancing boys, listen to stories from the Koran, watch snake-charmers, laugh at clowns and tumblers, eat hard-boiled eggs and *couscous* and drink mint tea, and barter the goods they have brought. Every Moroccan town has a central meeting-place like this, but none with the character and flavour of the Place Djemaa El Fna.

At sunset on my first day in Marrakesh, I drove in a carriage to the great Aguedal gardens of olive, pomegranate and orange groves, in the park of the Sultan's palace. In the midst of these gardens are two vast reservoirs, like lakes, filled with precious water from the mountains. The water flows into canals under the trees, and keeps the park perpetually green. From the balustrade around these lakes you can look across the fragrant gardens to the white peaks of the High Atlas, and guess at the heart of Africa beyond. Marrakesh is an outpost of North Africa, a gate to the dark continent to the south. As I watched the mountains bleach out in the gathering dark, that first evening, I saw a black, horse-drawn brougham roll by with most of the shades lowered. Through the one open window, I could see two Arab soldiers with two veiled Arab women, their black eyes gleaming under the hoods of their *djellabahs*. As they passed, I heard the tinkling of some guitar-like instrument and the notes of strange singing. They stopped a minute, eyed me, chatted and laughed, and then went on deep into

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\* El Glaoui died as Morocco gained its independence. His possessions were all confiscated by the newly independent Moroccan Government

the garden, strumming their guitars and singing in the fragrance of the darkening night. This carriage passing me, like a ship at sea, so strange, so far away, so removed from anything I knew, made me feel the gulf between our life and this outpost of the Orient.

That night I dined with El Glaoui for the first time. He sent guards and slaves to my hotel to lead me through the maze of streets to his palace. Like all Moroccans he followed the Koran—which urges the faithful to keep the façade of their house simple and unpretentious, so as not to excite the envy of their fellow men. The reddish brown, rather ugly, façade of El Glaoui's palace gave no hint of the incredible luxury and magnificence of the rooms, courtyards, gardens and pavilions beyond. We were six at the *diffa* or dinner, sitting on deep cushions and eating course after course of exquisitely cooked food from a single plate with our fingers. From the alcove where we dined we could hear a fountain splashing and smell fragrant flowers and shrubs. The whole courtyard was flooded with moonlight, and the deep blue-black sky overhead studded with stars. Around the edge of the courtyard sat slaves and servants, their eyes gleaming under white turbans or red fezes, ready, when the Pasha gave the sign, to bring more food, chickens cooked in olives or oranges, succulent roast lamb with spices or pitchers of milk flavoured with rose leaves or almonds, or orange juice tasting of cinnamon.

From the first I had a feeling that El Glaoui was sincerely loyal to the Allied cause. Naturally, being a Moroccan and my host, he expressed sympathy for America; but it was not his polite phrases that gave me this feeling. It was the few but highly pertinent remarks he made about British and American war potentialities. He had a shrewd and informed knowledge of our sea power, our industrial capacity, and the strategic geographical positions we held in the coming battles. He spoke not merely as a mountain tribesman, bred to war, but as a world strategist, a soldier well aware of the international picture.

But as we discussed the war I had a mounting and most peculiar sensation that something strange was going on in the Pasha's palace. The atmosphere seemed more and more charged; palace functionaries whispered in corners, and the majordomo, each time he went by the Pasha, would very softly say something in his ear. I studied the Pasha's face, but saw not a trace of concern or preoccupation. It was a mask of composure, dignity and calm; his manners remained those of the perfect host, seeing to the pleasure of his guests.



After dinner, as we walked around the palace and listened to musicians, I felt even more tension in the air. As we turned corners in the winding, high-ceilinged corridors, we would come upon groups of slaves whispering together. They would fall back silently against the white walls, their black eyes following us as we passed. One of the guests would occasionally, apparently by accident, drop a little behind us, and then there would be a hissing whisper of '*Monsieur le contrôleur, Monsieur*' and a Moor would slip up, whisper a few words in the man's ear, and then, with a masklike face, fall back again beside the wall.

Finally, we said goodnight and left, only to find even more tension outside the palace. There are always crowds of Arabs at the Pasha's door, but this night the whole street was teeming with excitement. I saw an Arab friend waiting for us, obviously because he wanted to discuss the affair with one of the Pasha's guests. He was preoccupied, it seemed, with the problem that was upsetting all of Marrakesh that particular evening—the imprisonment of the Kalifa of the Pasha, El Biaz, on the Sultan's orders. In spite of the outward signs of power and riches of this Kalifa, because of court intrigues and rivalry he lost everything during this evening. This, I soon found, was in the best Moroccan tradition and was a sample of the fear and uncertainty under which rich and poor alike live.

Other chieftains did not give me the same impression that El Glaoui did of belief in our cause, or at least in our victory. I knew a son of the powerful Caïd Layadi, for instance. Caïd Layadi is the head of an Arab tribe (the Glaoua belong to the more vigorous and intelligent Berber stock) on the barren plains between Marrakesh and Settat, halfway to Casablanca. Like El Glaoui, he had had the good sense to side with the French when they were taking over Morocco, and he was profiting from that wordly wisdom.

The young Layadi I knew took me to my first Arab wedding. It was, like El Glaoui's dinners, pure Arabian Nights. A servant was sent to my hotel to lead me to the place in the street where Layadi was waiting for me, and together we watched the procession of gifts from the Pasha to the groom and bride. The street was jammed with people, who were pushed out of the way by the Pasha's guards. Behind them came scores of slaves carrying enormous rugs rolled up and laid on their shoulders. Behind them again were other slaves, trays on their heads with pyramid covers over tea-leaves and perfumes, or with great jars of

honey and precious oils. Layadi told me that he had also, that afternoon, sent over a truly royal present: forty Swiss cows. While the procession wound through the streets by torchlight, the Arab women\* made the night quiver with a strange high-pitched noise called the *yoyo*, a sort of quavering yodel they use for moments of great excitement. Finally Layadi said: 'Now, we shall go into the palace.' With that, he called his servants who went before us with whips and mercilessly beat a path for us through the crowd. We followed them to the palace among screaming, stampeding children, veiled women and turbaned men. Inside, the vast inner courts were filled with hundreds of the Caïd's tribesmen. The light welled up from below and cast a sort of submarine glow on the scores of Arab women who sat, swathed in white, watching the party from the roofs.

The big event this evening was the presence of the old Caïd, receiving and welcoming the guests assembled in honour of the wedding. The next day, and succeeding days (a rich Arab's wedding often lasts two or three weeks) the bridegroom and his friends spent their time in a gaily coloured tent in a garden, eating and watching clowns and dancers. About midnight, each night, the whole party would make a procession back to the palace and deliver the bridegroom to the bridal chamber door before which, on a chair, were placed the wedding robe and golden *babouch*, or shoes, of his bride.

Layadi, I think, felt a genuine friendship for me. He assured me that he and his father admired the United States. Yet when he went on to say that his father believed in the Allied cause and disliked the Germans, I did not have the same feeling of conviction that I gathered from the conversation of El Glaoui. In the months that followed, I learned that Caïd Layadi, was, as a matter of fact, the most important of the native chiefs in German pay.

This spying and counterspying in North Africa was extremely complicated, even among Europeans. While American diplomats abroad seldom lead the exotic life sketched out for them by Hollywood, they do, in wartime at least, come in contact with a good deal of international intrigue and even violence. Some of our North African experiences were interesting to anyone concerned with the day-to-day job our Foreign Service must do.

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\* Usually called 'fatimas' by the French and other foreigners, but this is a term disagreeable to Moroccans as it is a much respected first name, as it would be to us if women of Christian countries were called 'Marys'

## MOORS AND FRENCHMEN

One of our functions as control officers was to act as couriers between Tunis and Algiers, Algiers and Oran, Oran and Casablanca, Casablanca and Tangier. Most of these trips could be made on the excellent civilian air lines of Air France. This company did a remarkable job considering its shortages of petrol and spare parts, but our trips were watchful ones. German and Italian agents often made the flights with us and when we saw one of their familiar faces on the plane we had to keep especially close guard on the baggage compartment where the padlocked canvas diplomatic pouches were kept. (In those days, these pouches were filled with maps for future use, reports on the North African political situation, and military data on topics like beaches and airports. Later, we also carried heavy and secret cargoes of radios and more dangerous equipment in them.) The Air France personnel were all, as far as we could see, on our side, and made special efforts to protect us and our papers.

Each time the Casablanca-Algiers plane stopped at Oran our faithful colleagues, Knight and Rounds, were at the airport to give us their pouch and their news. One day, at the dusty Oran airport, during the usual twenty-minute halt, I was sitting talking with my colleagues in their car when suddenly, a few minutes before the time for departure, two little men rushed up with a couple of red and white awning-striped canvas diplomatic bags. 'If you please sirs,' said the more harassed looking of the pair, 'will you be so kind as to leave these bags for us at the Italian Consulate in Oran? We have been expecting a car but it hasn't yet shown up and the plane is due to leave.' We couldn't help smiling as we looked at the two nervous, hot Italians. Knight said, 'You evidently don't realize we are American vice-consuls.' They paled visibly under their layer of dust, gave us a sickly smile and melted away.

The trip from Casablanca to the international madhouse of Tangier was more difficult, because the one inadequate night train was finally cut to two trips a week. We often had to make the trip by car, two of us together, so that the diplomatic pouches would never be left alone in case of accident. Accidents were frequent with our battered old cars, and we often walked miles along deserted Moroccan roads in search of help.

In those pre-landing days the only official contact we had with the British was at Tangier; their consulates and diplomatic representatives left French-dominated territory when diplomatic relations were broken

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

after the British attack on the French fleet, and the British nationals left in French Morocco were mostly Jews from Gibraltar and Malta. The British, like other powers, had many secret agents in French Morocco, but communication with them was difficult, partly because of censorship, partly because of the numerous spy systems.

Naturally we helped the British in their war effort in any way we could. One of our jobs at the Consulate was to act as liaison for them and also to hand on information that we collected, particularly on shipping. We kept them posted on the French naval units and noted any merchant ships that came by Morocco on their way to Marseilles with, for instance, cargoes of rubber.

We came in close contact with British intelligence work. The British were in an almost desperate situation at that time. Gibraltar was their last bastion in the western Mediterranean, and only Malta, Egypt and the extreme eastern Mediterranean coastline were free from enemy control. British officials sat helplessly in Gibraltar and Tangier, watching ship after ship of the French merchant marine carrying supplies from the Empire to metropolitan France. They knew that only 20 per cent of this material remained in France, while 80 per cent was divided, very unequally, between Germany and Italy. Any agents they could get to impede this traffic, any act of sabotage against it, was a military victory.

We understood this, and sympathized with it, but we deplored what we thought was a lack of comprehension of a bigger stake to be won on the diplomatic level. In the first place, the British bribed the worst elements in the population; most of their information was paid for. This practice of paying for information is, many American diplomats believe, expensive, dangerous, and politically almost useless. Anyone who will receive money to give information obviously has his price, and is merely waiting to get more money from your enemies. I never used money at any time, and yet found a great many Frenchmen ready, for purely patriotic reasons, to give us any information we wanted.

In the second place, the British used violent sabotage. We objected to this on policy grounds, and our differences with the British here reflected, of course, the differences on a higher level on the whole policy with France. Our idea throughout was to work *with* the French, even the Pétainist French, in the belief that they were basically honest and patriotic. The British had despaired of the Pétainists and washed them out as possible allies. They worked in French territory as if it

were enemy territory. When they involved us in their more drastic moves, it naturally undercut our whole influence in North Africa.\*

I remember one episode particularly which illustrates this difference in policy in those early, troubled days. One day, on a courier trip to Tangier, I was approached in the Minzah Hotel lobby by an Englishman of the Intelligence Service who had recently arrived from London. He asked me if I would take a small package and a letter to one of his secret agents in Casablanca on my return trip. I said that I would, and asked him to give me the package and letter. 'Oh, no,' he said, looking around the crowded lobby, 'we will bring it to your room if you will set an hour.' At 9.30 the next morning, he showed up with a young assistant. I said to them, 'I shall have to ask you to open the package and the letter so I can see what I am taking before I assume the responsibility of carrying them into French Morocco on my diplomatic visa.'

'Oh, there's nothing important in the package,' the secret agent said negligently. 'Just hand it over to our man in Casablanca.'

I looked at the address, and saw it was being sent to a man who lived not far from my apartment. 'Well,' I said 'if you don't want to open the package I shall have to.'

Unwrapping it as I spoke, I found that it contained two bombs. 'I'm very sorry,' I said, somewhat taken aback, 'but I shall be unable to deliver these for you.'

The agent reached into his pocket and drew out an enormous roll of bills, saying as he did so, 'Perhaps this would come in handy.' 'No, thank you,' I said, 'I don't need the money. But don't worry. On second thoughts, I think I can manage the errand for you.'

I realized at once that the bombs were to be used to sabotage a stock of rubber that was lying, at the time, near the Casablanca harbour. When I later opened the letter, on the way back to Casa, this hunch was confirmed; the letter named the day for carrying out such a plan. I was much concerned, because I feared that if any such blatant piece of sabotage took place while we Americans were circulating around Morocco, we would be blamed, perhaps expelled, and our whole overall plans for the future jeopardized. So I quietly jettisoned the bombs in the Atlantic and deposited the letter in my strongbox at the Consulate.

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\* This was on a local, limited level only. The British Prime Minister, Mr Churchill, on 27 March 1942 wrote to President Roosevelt: 'We value your contacts with Vichy and it is well worth paying a certain price.' (from Roosevelt papers)

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

This sort of thing happened time and time again between the British Intelligence Service and ourselves, until finally the top men in London and Washington worked policies out better, the British were more convinced of the good results of the American approach in North Africa, and the overall directions from both capitals were straightened out.

All was not sweetness and light, of course, in the handling of the American policy, and we had increasing trouble with Vichy officials, especially after the recall of Weygand.

Weygand was so passionately attacked and defended in the American press that a note on him, as we saw him on the spot, might be a useful footnote to history. I do not know the whole Weygand story in detail, but I know enough to hope that one day the State Department will release the missing facts in it.

Weygand was heavily involved in a question that will always be a bitter one to Frenchmen: the question of whether or not an armistice was necessary, and whether or not the government could have been moved to North Africa. Weygand's recommendations on both scores were purely military ones. The political decisions were made by Reynaud, Pétain and others. All were wrong from our point of view. When Mr Churchill made his generous offer of joint citizenship to the French, Weygand again took a purely military view of it. It was not a question, he said, of fusing the two empires in the future, but of how many troops and planes Britain could immediately supply. All in all, he was an acute example of the unhappy relations that always exist between the military forces of defeated allies.

In Africa Weygand was in charge and served his country well. We had no other person to deal with there. Once faced with French defeat, and with the fact that his fears over England's chances for resistance had proved false, he set to work, as a general virtually without armaments, to use the only weapons left to him: ingenuity and patriotism. He was a man of extraordinary personality, and it was easy to believe that one of the many rumours about his royal, foreign birth might be true. Weygand had certainly been entered at St Cyr as of 'unknown parentage', and his appearance was both distinguished and foreign. He was very small and wiry, with high cheekbones and deepset eyes. Though he was seventy-four years old at the time of his service in Algiers, he was incredibly young and active, giving an impression of inexhaustible nervous energy under an iron control. I remember the

young wife of a French diplomat who had to take to her bed after a half-day of sightseeing on foot with Weygand, while he kept on working the rest of the day and evening. Unlike most Frenchmen, he took good care of himself, and followed a strict regime, even eating 'sensible' food.

In Africa, he travelled incessantly, and did the most important thing necessary in fusing the countries together and giving them strength to resist German propaganda: his magnetism, the quality the French call *rayonnement*, produced in them a real fire of devotion to the idea of France. He held the Army together, even though it was unarmed. As noted before, he kept careful tabs on the Germans and was useful in many ways to us. Though he was a Tory of the deepest dye, had fought the Russians and distrusted the intelligence of the English, he had always firmly believed, for the security of his country, in alliance with both Russia and Great Britain. During this war, however, he thought only the United States could help France. (He estimated it would take us two years.) His Toryism actually made him more useful to us in North Africa, where we had to deal with feudal and reactionary people, used to living under a military dictatorship.

Weygand has been criticized for not coming over from southern France to North Africa at the time of our landings. From accounts of people close to him, I think that when the whole story is known it will be found that he expected at that time the Allied landings in France itself that both the British and ourselves let the French think would be made. He stayed in France, to assist us there, on the undefended southern coast.

When the Germans, who had thought he was a 'safe' man, saw him flying from Tunisia to Algeria to Morocco to Dakar and West Africa, when they saw the way in which his gift for military drama appealed to the natives, when they saw the way Africa united behind Weygand, and when they saw Americans begin to appreciate him, they knew it was time to send him home. Huntzinger's spying confirmed their worst suspicions, and Weygand went back sadly to France. The Nazis so thoroughly distrusted Weygand by this time that they would not allow him, or his son, to return to Algiers long enough to pack their luggage. Their action was a tribute to our wisdom in working with Weygand.

In December 1941, shortly before the beginning of General Rommel's terrible, and almost decisive, drive across Libya that nearly

reached Alexandria, our diplomatic work became more difficult. French cries for petrol and oil were piercing. The whole economy of North Africa, the very life of the country, depended on petrol and oil for transportation, irrigation and farm machinery. This was a very grave problem indeed, and although the arrival in the summer and autumn of 1941 of the French tankers *Frimaire*, *Schéhérezade* and *Lorraine* had made a great impression, the fact that no more tankers followed their single voyage caused a great deal of criticism. Wherever we went we met Frenchmen who either asked with strained politeness why we sent no more, or sneered openly at the inadequacies of our aid. The former attitude was annoying enough, but the latter was particularly difficult to take. For we had learned—not from Vichy, but from obscure and unwilling Frenchmen who were forced to handle the work—that the Vichyites led by Darlan had sent Rommel, in November and December of 1941, 1,000 trucks, 100,000 tons of wheat, and 8,000,000 litres of petrol.\* Under the Murphy-Weygand Accord, no product originating in the United States, or *any similar* commodity, could be sent out of North Africa; so the supplies that reached Rommel were a breach in spirit if not in fact of our agreement. By that time, however, we were in the war and our military needs in North Africa were so urgent that it became more vital than ever for us to remain there. We swallowed a good deal of our annoyance and went on with our work.

Pétain, by that time, as I have heard from people who worked with him, had only a few morning hours of energy or even lucidity. By afternoon those of his advisers plotting for closer collaboration with Germany found it increasingly easy to get his signature on dubious agreements. At this point, down in North Africa, we began to hear more and more about Admiral Darlan, who was to play such a big role in our landings and the political drama immediately afterwards.

Darlan was perhaps the most interesting case history in the whole question of our wartime diplomatic dealings with the French. Our contacts with him, our final decision to work with him, were bitterly criticized. In microcosm, they represent a basic issue in our foreign policy and in our diplomacy—the issue of expediency versus principle, of being ‘practical’ or of holding out, even at the cost of American blood and resources, for American ideals. As will be seen later, most

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\* The petrol, as a matter of fact, did not come from North Africa but was shipped from France in French boats



people in North Africa, liberal as well as conservative, finally agreed that our dealings with Darlan were justified in the final balance.\*

Everything we heard about him in 1941 was, however, unfavourable. He was the real father of Vichy collaboration, constantly working the old Marshal around to his point of view. Yet he was not a 'traitor' to France. He worked with the Nazis in the belief that only through their friendship could France survive. After Pearl Harbor and German reverses in Russia, he suddenly realized, with his knowledge of sea-power, that while the war would be long it would eventually end in Allied victory. In December 1941, though he remained a passionate anglophobe, he found it wise to change sides again.

Unfortunately, before this final switch Darlan was committed, by two visits to Hitler in March and May of 1941, to a substantial amount of collaboration. The first meeting was to establish the principle of co-operation, the second to plan details, such as giving the Germans the 'right of passage' on Syrian airfields. In these agreements, Darlan fatally committed his country to a policy of helping Germany. Although seven months later his belief in German victory wavered, he was in no position by that time to force Hitler to release France from her commitments. When Admiral Darlan was confronted by the American Embassy in Vichy with the help he had given the Axis, he said it was a question of giving the Germans supplies or of handing over Bizerta as a base. 'I picked the lesser of two evils,' he insisted.

While Darlan swung slowly to our side, we Americans hung on by a thread in North Africa. We were at last in the war but in no position then to take over Algeria, Morocco or any other place. Our problem was to survive in North Africa even though the Murphy-Weygand Accord was being constantly violated in spirit by Darlan's collaboration policies. Our career diplomats in Vichy and Mr Murphy in Africa deserve every credit for their ingenuity in staying on. They used Weygand's removal ingeniously to meet the situation. 'Very well,' they said, 'Weygand is gone and Darlan has violated our trade agreements; therefore we stop everything or renegotiate with some better assurance this will never happen again.'

Shortly after this, on New Year's Eve in Marrakesh, I met Commandant Bataille, a former naval officer who was in charge of rationing in Morocco, and one of General Noguès's confidants. As we chatted

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\* See Appendix X, p. 274

over the champagne, he made several sneering remarks about American aid, claiming it was worthless, and asking why we wouldn't send more petrol. I gave him our reasons, mentioning the fact that Admiral Darlan had broken our agreement by sending petrol to Rommel. Commandant Bataille became literally livid with rage at what I said, either because he knew it and had thought I did not, or because he thought I was lying. There was tremendous excitement next day throughout Marrakesh over this conversational episode.

We had many reasons to resent any talk of this kind in Morocco. The Murphy-Weygand Accord was to be based on reciprocal trade. Cork and tartar, as well as products of lesser importance, were to be shipped to the United States, and we were especially anxious for olive oil. Tunisia and Morocco were the greatest producers, and Moroccan oil was far more readily available than Tunisian because of transportation difficulties. General Noguès, however, in spite of Weygand's request, refused to allow a drop of Moroccan olive oil to leave for the United States. There were two reasons for this: the fact that Noguès was bitterly jealous of Weygand—a feeling that dated far back in their military careers—and the fact that Noguès, ever fearful for his job, thought that Weygand was running too great a risk in dealing so freely with us.

Yet during the black hour of Pearl Harbor, and after, I felt again how right our policy was in Africa. As we entered the war, letters and visitors poured into American houses in Morocco. All were sad and sympathetic, because all the French knew the full horror of war. Yet they were hopeful because they knew that with America in the war, the end, however long delayed, was certain. All through North Africa, for months afterwards, I met those same spontaneous, unmistakably sincere, feelings of liking and sympathy. Only a few officials had a reaction which left a bad taste in our mouths. In a rather patronizing way, they would say: 'Now you will understand what war is, and can't go on with your rich Yankee attitude of "business as usual".' This patronizing reaction, however, came from wounded pride and a sense of inferiority. It was not that they wished America ill, but that they felt we had never suffered enough to understand the suffering that had humiliated and defeated them.

## Black Months

The months after Weygand's recall, and especially after Pearl Harbor, were dark for us, as for everyone else. We had the special sense of fatality that everyone far from the front lines had, even when their job was intimately connected with winning the war; and the French officials around the Residency did not make our lives happier. Weygand's recall signalled the beginning of much heavier German pressure on the French authorities, and Noguès knuckled under. Americans in Morocco were more and more on the index. We thought at first that the orders came from Vichy, but our pipelines soon let us know that they came direct from the Resident General at Rabat.

Most of our French friends, however, remained courageous and sympathetic. In April of 1942, for instance, when Mrs Leahy, wife of our Ambassador and a much beloved figure in France, died at Vichy, I received no fewer than thirty letters of condolence simply as an American representative, many of them from total strangers. There were some French, of course, who had a much less sympathetic point of view towards Americans. They were not pro-German. I heard of very few out-and-out pro-German French, anywhere in North Africa. They were simply xenophobic. They hated everybody. They thought France's role should be to stay neutral and let the Germans and Allies exhaust themselves in the war, as France exhausted herself in 1914-18. Then they believed that France would start even, so to speak, in the world race again. This xenophobia was hard to distinguish from anti-Americanism at times, and it strained diplomatic patience to the limit.

Our isolation as Americans, and particularly mine, which was the most extreme, soon became a topic of conversation not only among the French but among the Moroccans. One day, I was told that the Pasha of Marrakesh, my friend El Glaoui, would like to see me. At his palace he gave me the usual warm welcome, with ceremonial mint tea and elaborate Arab cakes. We spoke of many things until, in the glancing Moroccan way, he mentioned the real reason he had sent for me. 'I

want you always to feel free to come here, or to go to any of my *kasbahs*,’ he said. ‘My sons live in many of them, and will also be glad to welcome you.’ I told him how grateful I was, and he continued; ‘I know of the order from the French Residency about you, but as long as you remain in my city of Marrakesh, among us Moroccans, I want you to know we are glad you are here. I have never hidden from you my belief in the Allied cause.’ At that point, with another charming smile, he adroitly changed the conversation again, and earnestly discussed horses and farming. Mehdi Glaoui, El Glaoui’s son, remained a faithful friend of mine too. He was a true believer in our cause, as well as a close personal friend. I was doubly unhappy to hear that he had been killed, fighting heroically as our ally, in Italy in 1944.

During this period political events in France had immediate repercussions in North Africa. One began on 19 February 1942, at Riom in France with the trials of the French leaders judged responsible for France’s defeat. With their mistaken psychology the Germans were encouraging these trials, believing the evidence brought out would further anti-Semitism, Nazism, and generally aid the cause of French collaboration with Germany that they pretended was so close to their hearts. The effect was quite the contrary. News from the courtroom at Riom acted as a stimulus to true French patriotism all over France and in the empire. Finally the Germans were obliged to order these trials stopped.

When Laval came to power, the xenophobic Frenchmen in North Africa, particularly the ones close to the Residency, became even more out-and-out anti-American. The United States was grouped with Great Britain for the first time in anti-Allied propaganda. Laval’s return was a dreadful shock and disillusionment to a great many North African French. Those who had sincerely believed Pétain was working for the best interests of France were horrified to see the Marshal welcome Laval back into his government. But many of them still held to their mystic, blind faith in Pétain no matter what he did. I remember running into a Frenchwoman I knew, an intelligent, cultivated person. She had always assured me that Pétain’s ousting of Laval in December 1940 proved that he was forceful enough not to become a German puppet. Yet when Laval returned to power she merely said: ‘Ah well, no matter: everything will be all right as long as we still have our Marshal.’

The worst result of Laval’s return, from our own standpoint in

Morocco, was the effect it had on Noguès. In spite of Noguès's coldness to us, the Germans had recently asked Pétain to recall him. The reason they gave Vichy was that there was too much American influence in Morocco, and that Noguès was surrounded by officials of whose politics they were not 'sure'. (The real reason, as we knew on the spot, was that Noguès, with all his faults, was an integrating force in Morocco, a good administrator who tried to keep French sentiment vigorous throughout the land.) Noguès was called to Vichy for 'consultations' in the spring of 1942. He flew there post-haste.

We heard later that Herr Auer, the German diplomatic agent in Morocco, happened to be sitting in Laval's waiting-room when Noguès turned up. Noguès begged Auer to take up his cause with the Germans and even pleaded with him to intercede with Laval. Auer did so, and Laval and the Germans restored Noguès to favour. But the episode left Noguès more afraid of American friendship than ever. As far as America was concerned, Noguès was useless from then on.

With Allied resistance continuing, Vichy's old nightmare of an abortive commando raid on the Moroccan coast was revived. As a preventative measure, the Vichy authorities one day ordered every British subject living on the coast to move at least 50 kilometres inland. The majority of these were Gibraltar and Maltese Jews who had lived for generations in Morocco and knew not one word of English. This action had a contrary effect to what Vichy wanted. The few hundred refugees immediately began learning English and overnight became more conscious of their nationality than they had ever been before.

As the black months of 1942 drew on it was harder and harder to persuade the Arabs, especially, of our ultimate victory. This was particularly true from the time of Rommel's hair-raising drive in December 1941 until the magnificent stand of the Eighth Army at Mersa Matruh the following June. Defeat followed defeat on every front, especially on the North African one of which the Arabs, naturally, were most conscious. The very day Tobruk fell with 30,000 British taken prisoner, Auer arrived in Fez, called together the most important Arab leaders, and said, 'You see, German victory is inevitable. Soon we shall be supreme in Africa, as in all Europe.'

All we had to counteract his undeniable facts were our arguments about the moral superiority of our cause, especially because of the German race philosophy, and the military fact that our potential

production and size was so much greater than theirs that time was on our side. It seems amazing in retrospect that most Arabs remained on our side, and that the majority of the French never lost faith in spite of the pessimism around the Residency. The blacker things looked, the more Frenchmen came quietly to us to tell us that they remained loyal and would help us to the end. During this time, we helped many Frenchmen to escape from North Africa to join the Fighting French outside, though we had to be careful, of course, to help only the Frenchmen we personally knew to be sincere, eager to fight, and already in danger from Vichy reprisals because of their sympathy with us. Too many were soldiers of fortune, tossed up by the tides of war in North Africa and trying to escape Moroccan debts—or worse.

Propaganda from all sides reached a new frenzy during early 1942. It was interesting to study the propaganda of the different countries from the receiving end in Africa. The Arabs seemed to agree that the German propaganda was well handled, even though they paradoxically didn't believe much of it, because they knew too much about the Germans. Even during the last war, the Germans had left agents in the south of Morocco to stir up the Arabs; and Moroccan soldiers taken prisoner during that war were used to teach German agents the various Moroccan dialects. During World War II Germans did the same thing. They also bribed, corrupted, and trained some of the Moorish prisoners and sent them back to Morocco to act as spies.

From Rome and Berlin Arab leaders\* chosen for their eloquence radioed a stream of speeches on the evils of French control, the vices of British imperialism, and the support Pan-Islam would receive from the Germans after Nazi victory. They told the Arabs that the French had favoured the Jews at the expense of the Arabs, and that this would be even worse under British 'Jewish-Freemason' influence. Through their agents, they painted a picture of commercial advantages in dealing with the Germans; Arabs are shrewd business men.

Sometimes the Nazis, with more adroitness, made the French protectorate announce some pro-Arab measure and then forbade it to be put into effect, confusing and irritating the Arabs. In Marrakesh in 1940, and in Tangier in 1942, they used the favourite Nazi method of training small groups of agitators who could be turned loose at the proper moment to start riots by breaking windows, pillaging, even

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\* Notably Hadj Anim El Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem

throwing bombs in the *souks*. The Arabs knew all this, and rather enjoyed all the attention they were getting. Many of them admired Germany, especially as Rommel swept across Libya, as Moors always admire power and great warriors. Yet they discounted German propaganda. Like the millions of pro-Roosevelt Americans who read the violently anti-Roosevelt press, they listened eagerly to the Axis speeches and agents, discussed them interminably, and believed them little if at all.

The Italians got nowhere in North Africa with their propaganda. Moors, especially, simply disdained the Fascists, both for their reputed physical cowardice and for their cruelties, widely reported, towards the natives of Libya, Abyssinia and Albania.

British propaganda the Arabs considered much less interesting than German. The Gaullists were a handicap to the British here as elsewhere in North Africa, because the official Gaullist line was that Morocco would be returned to its pre-war regime. Since the Arabs had won some concessions from the French during the war,\* this didn't go down well. The British also suffered from what the Moors considered their pro-Jewish attitude in Palestine.

The French worked with their usual adroitness to counteract German propaganda. Instead of openly refuting it, they had their secret agents photograph a report of Herr Auer's in which he said that the Moors were a degenerate people, unworthy of consideration by the *Herrenvolk*, and that the French were degenerate, too, for associating with them. The French, he added, as Germans have frequently said, were not stamping their influence on Africa, instead they were allowing 'the Africanization of the French'. This report was spread from *souk* to *souk* through Morocco and had a great effect.

As for us, we made little propaganda.† Our job was two-fold: to counteract German propaganda among the French themselves, by emphasizing our strength, and to counteract it among the Arabs by emphasizing not only our strength but our ideals. British propaganda among the Arabs actually made our job with the French more difficult.

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\* The French set aside certain new districts for exclusively Arab colonization, gave native authorities some purely theoretical powers, admitted Arabs into the official French Legion of War Veterans and enforced anti-Jewish laws

† Some O.W.I. pamphlets actually arrived, but they were so misdirected that we unanimously agreed to burn them. We found photographs of bombers, ships and factories much more effective

For some reason they sent in tracts from Tangier which could be interpreted as rousing the Arabs against the French. De Gaulle propaganda, too, was far from helpful. It came over the B.B.C. in a flood of vituperation against Vichy, with no word of even halfway understanding for the millions of Frenchmen who, rightly or wrongly, felt they were sincerely patriotic in following the Marshal. Our job with the Arabs was simpler on the political plane, partly because of the influence of the Atlantic Charter and the fact that we had never exploited an Islamic country, partly because of the solid argument of American cotton and milk. Moors have a human tendency to like the material evidence of good will.

During the spring of 1942 we also did more and more underground military work. By this time the landings in North Africa were openly speculated on at home and abroad, though only a few, of course, knew that they were actually definitely planned. We went about Morocco with a secret and growing excitement.

Among the most loyal and important figures we began to work with in 1942 were General Béthouart and his Chief of Staff, Colonel Pierre Magnan. Béthouart, known as 'The Hero of Narvik', was a soldierly figure who was sincerely and passionately anti-German though he later proved to be disappointingly ineffectual in aiding us during the landings. Like our other military contacts, this relationship with Béthouart was handled in a very careful way. Our Casablanca staff kept touch with him and the others not directly, but through intermediaries. In addition, the French military underground from France was in direct contact with them via their agents in Algiers.

As early as July 1941, the military attaché at Tangier, Colonel William Bentley, had told us what would be needed in Washington in the way of military information. We soon began to collect the best French military maps. Some of them came from our friends in the French Army, who would bring them secretly to our homes. Others we bought at a Casablanca bookstore where the proprietor, a handsome, dark-eyed Frenchwoman, would hide them for us in the cellar. (She always told the German Armistice Commission, which also tried to buy them, that she was out of stock.) We also gradually accumulated, throughout the next year, a mass of information of all kinds: the depth of ports, the best beaches for landings, the position of coastal defences, the tides, the treacherous Moroccan currents, the strength and disposition of French warships, the position and sizes of Army regiments,



the condition and direction of roads, the location of bridges, tunnels and railways.

Finally, we had to have secret communication systems, ready to go into action if the Germans beat us to the draw in North Africa. We placed radios with carefully selected French and Arab friends, and put them in touch with the proper people in Gibraltar and Tangier, and we also set up a native courier system to function as a second string. Both systems reached from the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts deep into the interior of Morocco.\*

The Arab courier system used the native grapevine which was extraordinary. I once, for instance, took a trip to Tetuan, in Spanish Morocco. There I learned of the arrival of some new, important German agents. I came back at once with the news to Marrakesh and waited for my Arab friends to give me this information. Within four days after I had heard the news in Tetuan several of my Arab friends in Marrakesh reported to me accurately the Germans' arrival, their work, and names, yet Tetuan is ten days from Marrakesh by mule or camel back.

During these black 1942 months† in Morocco, we had one bright piece of French military news: the fine action of General Leclerc and General Koenig in the wars in the Libyan desert. This gave North African Frenchmen great heart. They were enormously proud that Frenchmen at last were with their allies, fighting Germans. Oddly enough, it didn't increase de Gaulle's personal popularity at all. 'He should be on the battlefields of Libya,' they said, 'instead of making propaganda from London and Brazzaville.' Stories about de Gaulle's political manoeuvring were also beginning to be reported to North Africa from London. We heard, for instance, of the way in which he had forbidden French fliers to become part of the R.A.F., as the

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\* Mehdi Glaoui proved a remarkably efficient radio operator and managed to set up a whole chain of radio sending and receiving sets in Marrakesh and in *kasbahs* belonging to the Glaoui family in the Atlas

† These months would not have been so black had we known that President Roosevelt had written to Mr Churchill, on 28 July 1942: 'I cannot help feeling that the past week'—July 20–5, during which time the final decision was taken to proceed with TORCH, the name given to the Allied landings in North Africa—'represents a turning point in the whole war and that we are now on our way shoulder to shoulder.' *The Second World War*, v. 2, *The Hinge of Fate*, by Sir Winston Churchill, Cassell, London 1950

Poles and Norwegians did, and of his stubborn refusal to co-operate with his own allies, or even with violently anti-German Frenchmen who would not swear blind allegiance to him. Frenchmen commented bitterly that he never made one anti-Nazi speech: his speeches were directed solely against other French factions.\*

We also heard rumours from London regarding de Gaulle's belief in personal leadership. In *Le Fil de L'Épée*,† his book on the revival of French Army power, for instance, he had long before emphasized the idea that a great military leader should seize any opportunity to stamp his own mark on history. The masses, he added, 'can only be moved by elementary feelings, by violent images, by brutal invocations'. 'Force is the law of nations and settles their destinies.' The man of character, de Gaulle said, 'moves to impose his stamp upon action, to take it over for his own account and to make of it his business. He has the passion of will power and the jealousy of making decisions.' 'The passion of acting by himself is evidently accomplished by a certain roughness in the means employed. . . . Such a chief is distant. . . . Below him there are murmurings. . . . (But) when the crisis arises, it is he who is followed.' Politicians and soldiers alike, he concludes, must be 'haunted with this ardour (to) see in life no other meaning than that they should impress their stamp upon events. . . . There exists no illustrious career in arms that has not served a vast political aim, nor any great glory of a statesman that has not been gilded by the brilliant light of national defence.' Though de Gaulle also added, almost as an afterthought, that these Carlyle Hero-Men should also be kind to the people they dominated, the whole book gave its few French readers‡ a heart-sickening impression of a man who thought only in terms of power, of nationalism and of militarism: a man, in fact, indistinguishable from the militarists he was fighting. No one who knew the inside stories about de Gaulle was surprised when he began trying to play the Americans against the British as early as the summer of 1941, angling for the best offer he could get.§ In spite of the gallantry of the

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\* See Appendix XI, p. 289

† Paris, Editions Berger-Levrault, 1932. The volume, incidentally, is glowingly dedicated to Pétain, who, the author says, is his source of inspiration

‡ It passed almost unnoticed in France and evidently didn't reach the Gaullists in America at all

§ See Appendix IX, p. 267

## BLACK MONTHS

Free French, Gaullism was another dark question mark in our minds in North Africa in 1942.

My own personal life changed at this time. In the late spring of 1942 our Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim* in Tangier, under whom the Casablanca Consulate functioned, asked for my recall to Washington. I was, he said, unfair to General Noguès and I was making trouble for the French among the Arabs. He himself was strongly pro-Noguès and believed in him up to the very moment at which Noguès resisted us during the landings. Needless to say, I was disturbed to discover that my work had not been approved by my immediate superiors, though I realized that the difficulty was due to a genuine difference of opinion and perhaps to an unavoidable clash of personalities. Washington, although I had had commendations from the State Department, issued the order for my recall, but Robert Murphy got through to them and I was transferred instead to Algiers to be with him. In June, I very regretfully left Morocco.

## Undercover Days

Algeria has an entirely different flavour from Morocco, even in peacetime. It had an especially different flavour for us, as Americans, that summer of 1942. For here preparations for our invasion now only a few months away were even more urgent, secret and dangerous than in Morocco. The capital city, Algiers, was the G.H.Q. of our underground. Here we were directly in touch with our key agents, rather than with the French sympathizers (mostly Army men) we used in Morocco. Here we saw agents direct from France and later the top British and American military men. Algeria was a network of intrigue, the scene of an international melodrama that was all the more exciting because it took place entirely beneath the surface of that sultry, strange North African land.

It is a less attractive land, in many ways, than Morocco. Lying rich and exposed on the Mediterranean shore, it has been an imperial highway for many hundreds of years. Algerians seem softer, more Levantine than the Moroccans. The poorer ones, dressed in filthy European-style clothes, topped with fezes, swarmed in homeless thousands through the streets of Algiers during that summer of 1942. They slept in doorways and alleys, leaving a trail of stench and human filth wherever they went. The prevailing atmosphere was one of degradation, lack of ambition and sheer dirt.

Algiers had lost the romantic quality it apparently had before World War I. The famous Casbah district had been almost destroyed, for sanitary reasons. Where once lay the incredible tangle of an Arab seaport, there rose an enormous, vital European city, a fake French town but a magnificent one. An esplanade, with a row of fine classical white apartment houses and shops, ran parallel to but above the waterfront, hiding the untidy but interesting life of the port from view. Behind it, on steep streets and endless steps, rose the shining white city. The Admiralty section of town was entirely different: crooked and African, it projected into the sea on the first of the tiny islands

that encircle the port and that, christened by the Spanish conquerors of long ago, have given their name to the city. Most of the magnificent, snowy villas that at the time of the French conquest used to gleam among the pine trees above the harbour, had given way to mammoth white apartment houses of a more modern architecture. Motor transport had completely broken down in the city; only a few diplomats, high-ranking French and German and Italian Armistice Commission members still had cars, only a few buses still ran; and Arabs, cruelly flogging their bony horses, drove carts and wagons up and down the steep streets between the shining buildings.

The French Government had grown more and more inefficient in Algiers, and the general atmosphere of dirt and disintegration among the natives, the breakdown of communications and the lack of morale I soon encountered were all made worse by a growing clothing and food crisis. Clothing was so scarce that the Berber women living in the near-by Kabyle mountains often had to wait at home until their husbands' return, and then borrow the men's *burnouses* to go and fetch water. As far as food went, conditions were not, of course, as desperate as in France—it was touching to see the joy with which French refugees crowded into the restaurants—but they were bad enough to make you start thinking inadvertently about lunch an hour or so after you finished breakfast. The standard meal, in good restaurants, was a watery soup, noodles or spaghetti, an occasional lamb stew, lettuce with an anaemic tomato, and water ice. Everything was cooked, for unfathomable reasons, in oil which had been shipped in paraffin cans; and everything had an unique and far from palatable flavour. Those who could, drove frequently to the black-market restaurants which flourished in the country outside Algiers. The most famous was at Bouseresa, run by a beldame who deeply admired Americans and Mr Murphy in particular and refused to allow any German or Italian to set foot in her *Hôtel Céleste*.

The climate of Algiers, I soon felt, accounted for a lot of its atmosphere of opportunism and amorality, and left its stamp on all our dealings there. Morocco is hot, but it is an Atlantic country; there are sea winds, and the air inland is dry. Algeria is bathed in heat like a Turkish bath, humid, clinging, suffocating, except for the dry magnificent date-producing oases of the inland. The moisture over the rich land around the coast produced, of course, great riches of citrus fruits, grains, and above all grapes. But it also produced hot tempers,

indolence and a pervading atmosphere of indifference to ideas or ideals.

Our offices, as control officers, were next to Mr Murphy's in the old British Consulate opposite the Admiralty. We were on the top floor, and the view from our windows was one of the loveliest imaginable, with small pleasure- and fishing-boats dotting the blue of the little Yacht Club harbour below us. Beyond it, we could see the main port, sparkling blue, too, but strangely empty except for an occasional sleek-looking French submarine or a bristling destroyer. From time to time a single steamer made a round trip, to intense excitement, from Marseilles; two or three others lay permanently docked in the harbour and became landmarks. The French used them as barracks after the landings. Beyond this big bay again, to the east, lay the Kabyle mountains, washed with still another shade of blue, beautiful but tame after the mighty Atlas range of Marrakesh.

The European atmosphere in Algiers was international in flavour, and yet provincial. Gossip was local and petty; personalities loomed bigger than life. The city boasted a university, a museum, a library, concerts, even an occasional play. No dancing was allowed publicly nor alcohol to be drunk on certain days, on orders from Pétain, who wanted France to consider herself more or less in mourning, but there was incessant gambling at the Hotel Aletti casino. Rich Algerian Arabs, in their high white headdresses and pongee suits, played there with Europeans of all stripes, and huge sums of the inflated French currency changed hands over the green tables.

The Aletti, where I lived, was an African version of Grand Hotel, pillaged by Arabs until it had only one, questionably clean, linen sheet per bed, and so low on supplies of all kinds that hot water was turned on only an hour daily, and finally not at all. Its outdoor café and bar produced the wildest rumours in Algeria. It was jammed every afternoon with businessmen marketing date and wine crops, most of which found their way to Germany. (The local story was that the wine was made into industrial alcohol.) In the crowd were adventurers, secret agents for all countries, Armistice Commission dignitaries, demimondes and rich natives. Down near the railway and bus stations you sometimes saw refugees just out of France. You could always spot them; their faces were thin, the men's collars too big for them. The better-dressed women almost invariably wore a great deal of gold jewellery; this was because gold was their only security against the terrific inflation.

## UNDERCOVER DAYS

In the evenings, as the heat lifted, Algiers promenaded along the esplanade, or collected in the Place Bugeaud, near the harbour, to listen to the military band under the palm trees. Then it seemed, except for the Arabs, more like Nice or Marseilles than ever. Outside the city a rich and seclusive life went on in the villas and great country estates of the landowners. We never saw that life. The so-called aristocracy of Algeria was in part afraid to be seen with us and in part simply didn't like Americans. They kept equally aloof from the French refugees in Algiers. Beyond, far beyond, lay the desert, to the south, and the Kabyle mountains, to the east. These mountains are unique and have a civilization of their own: I loved the strange villages, built on the top of mountains, where the women must climb down to the valley daily to get water. Here, as everywhere, I found English women missionaries patiently working at their monumental and apparently hopeless task of converting the Mohammedan natives. This peace and idealism was far distant, however, from the seething, spy-infested city of Algiers.

The blowsy Algerian atmosphere is important to an understanding of our actions there. We were criticized at the time for not finding more acceptable collaborators for our landing. We often, God knows, wished for a better organized underground there, for agents with more moral conviction, for larger groups of liberal minded, pro-democratic Frenchmen in Algiers. They were, unfortunately, simply non-existent. We did deal with what small left-wing groups were available, with some patriotic Army men, with the Jewish minority, with some intellectuals. But most of the men who could actually help us in our dangerous military venture were not men we would have picked for a political one. They were useful to us for their own reasons, and those reasons were varied; some personal, some political, some creditable, some not. All were sincerely anti-German, and not one betrayed us or our cause. They were the only human weapons available, and we were probably fortunate to find them.

For the truth of the Algerian situation was that the country was intensely conservative, anti-Semitic, even feudal. The landowners who formed the dominant class came largely from Alsace-Lorraine, after the Franco-Prussian war. Able pioneers, they soon grew prosperous; their descendants conserved their gains and became enormously rich. The country, almost exclusively agrarian, was divided into vast, self-sufficient estates, empires within an empire, and the landowners themselves

gradually became Algerian rather than French, insulated against all the social turmoil and liberal thought of France. Recent arrivals from metropolitan France were much more sincere patriots. They sensed and disliked, with us, the unwelcoming and rather hostile atmosphere created by their North African compatriots, so long transplanted from the soil of France. Algeria, they soon realized, was commercial-minded, a money-making country; and the whole tone among the Algerian French was set by the Tory, backward economic structure.\*

Most of Algiers, however, was pro-American, but pro-American in a passive way. Most Frenchmen we met there hoped that the United States would some day help France to rise up and drive the enemy out, but were unwilling to do much to speed her deliverance.† The English were far from popular and so was de Gaulle. A sizeable minority of Algerian Frenchmen were simply apathetic; they believed France's relative position in Europe would be strengthened by her remaining passive while the other big powers exhausted themselves. (This was one of Marshal Pétain's most shocking and devitalizing contributions to French thought.) A small, but very active, minority were ardent collaborationists, though, oddly enough, they were not pro-German. (No one was. In spite of the moral sleaziness in Algiers, I never saw a French girl with a German. I did see one beautiful and rich Algerian French blonde with an Italian from the Armistice Commission; infuriated patriots promptly shaved her lovely head.) All three kinds of Frenchmen—hopeful, neutral and collaborationist—looked to Pétain as head of the state, mystic leader, and symbol of eternal France. Pétain filled and played up to the fullest the role of supreme patriarch over a Roman Catholic State, the role which is today being more and more simulated by de Gaulle.

There was a genuine if unpublicized underground in Algiers. Most of this underground was in the Army, then demobilized and in civilian clothes, but still kept in a cohesive group by secret directions and guidance from France. It had no political or party flavour: it was purely anti-German and pro-French. If this underground had a hero, it was General Giraud. Giraud had written a letter to his children from

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\* This is Algiers and Algeria before the Algerian war of independence when the European population (mainly French) was 950,000. It is now hardly 75,000, even including French technicians and school teachers employed by the Algerian Government

† The same could have been said of de Gaulle



## UNDERCOVER DAYS

his prison at Koenigstein, Germany, in which he outlined his plan and dream for the future of France.\* It was remarkable to see how this letter kindled hope in the discouraged French. Copies of it were circulated all over France. Even in Morocco, French men and women constantly borrowed my typewriters to make copies of the letter for distribution in North Africa. The fact that Giraud had refused to buy his release from the Germans, as many others did, the fact that he had escaped from Koenigstein and returned to France under breath-taking circumstances, and the fact that he had a brilliant military record in North Africa as well as in France, soon made us realize that he might be a good choice of a French military leader with whom to negotiate for the coming landings.

Through secret agents, Giraud then sent word to many officers in the French North African Army, asking them to join him in collaborating with the Americans. We worked with numbers of these officers. One of our earliest and most important collaborators was small, thin General Mast, of the Region of Algiers, known in our secret code as 'Flagpole'. He represented Giraud later at the secret ChercHELL meeting with General Clark. General Alphonse Juin† was commander-in-chief of all the French forces in North Africa, but because of his allegiance to Pétain, and the fact that he had been released from prison in Germany only after giving his word of honour that he would never take up arms again against the Germans, we did not feel as sure of him as of Giraud.

De Gaulle's followers criticized us bitterly for not using their General or the Gaullist groups in our landings. We actually tried to do so, but when our State Department asked André Philip, the head of de Gaulle's underground, if he could put us in touch with Gaullist groups in North Africa, Philip was forced to answer that they did not have a single 'cell' there. There was no Gaullist movement in Algiers or Morocco, though anybody who was pro-Ally was popularly called a 'Gaullist'. Many resistance forces did later join with the Gaullists, after our landings, but in 1942 they were simply anti-Vichy, pro-Ally and above all pro-American.

The men who were most useful to us had only this simple common denominator: they were anti-German and for us. Some of them—Algerian Jews and brave Frenchmen who had lost their jobs because

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\* See Appendix XII, p. 291

† Later Marshal Juin

they had defied Vichy in some way—had deep emotional reasons as well for loathing Vichy. Unfortunately the Jews, though they were eager to help us and did help us at the time of the landing, were almost useless in reaching the men we needed most; the men who could see to it that we did not meet heavy military resistance when we landed. They had little influence in the Army to begin with, and their feeling was so intense that it made them extremely indiscreet, and frightened would-be collaborators away from us.

We had other minorities of a wide variety helping us, too; some of our most earnest workers, paradoxically, were royalists; some headed strange youth movements or the like. All in all, we had such varying breeds and stripes of people in our odd but successful underground, that it was hard to remember them all. I remember once, for instance, seeing a hauntingly familiar face at the Hotel Aletti bar and half bowing with the feeling that this must be one of our agents, only to realize suddenly, with inner amusement, that it was a member of the German Armistice Commission in Morocco who tried to have me expelled from North Africa.

The agents we used most were men who were in touch both with the French underground and with the all-important military leaders in Algiers and Morocco. Four of them, especially useful to us, were widely and sometimes rightly attacked at the time. They were strange and interesting figures and I will have reason to mention them again in discussing the French political situation after our landings. For the record, here they are.

The first was Jacques Lemaigre-Dubreuil,\* a powerful, aggressive businessman who brought his family to Algiers shortly after the fall of France. Our code name for him was 'Robinson Crusoe'. Though he was unquestionably reactionary, he was anti-German and a patriot. He was also a shrewd and subtle operator, who made the Germans believe that he was a collaborator and got them to let him move much of his Dunkirk factory to North Africa. His relations with the Germans were invaluable to us; they meant that he could travel freely from North Africa into both Unoccupied and Occupied France, keeping us in touch with various elements of the French Army in both places. A

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\* Later, in 1955, shot down and killed as he left his apartment house in Casablanca by a person or persons of a French reactionary group. This was done because he was considered too pro-Moroccan and liberal-minded, during the unsettled period when Morocco gained its independence from France

thick-set man in his middle forties, with piercing eyes and an oddly husky voice, he was a dynamo of energy more in the American than the classic French style. He had married Simone Le Sueur, daughter of one of the '200 Families' which reputedly controlled France before the war, and as a result had practically a monopoly on French cooking oil through Le Sueur and Company. His business, which was founded on the olive oil of North Africa and the peanut oil of Dakar, gave him an excellent excuse to see us in Algiers.

Working with Lemaigre-Dubreuil, theoretically as a business employee, was a most extraordinary character, Jean Rigault, known in our code as his man, 'Friday'. Actually, Rigault did no business for Le Sueur and Company: his only activities were as an agent for us. A thin, almost emaciated little man, he seemed all mind and no physique, but he demonstrated tremendous endurance during all the landing period and after, and was invaluable to us. He had a strange history: a period of political study while he was in a tuberculosis sanatorium; a period as a journalist; and a short career as an adviser to a French bank. He had also, at one time, belonged to that violent and semi-Fascist organization, the Cagoule, but, I understand, to a dissident minority which broke away. This rather unsavoury background made him suspect to many; yet the curious fact is that he served our interests loyally, risked his life for us, worked harder than anyone I have ever known for the cause, and, after the landings, urged Giraud towards a democratic, liberal policy which the General unfortunately adopted too late. He was another example of the danger of classifying human beings into 'good' and 'bad'.

Jacques de St. Hardouin, another of our original key men in Algiers, was a career diplomat with the rank of Counsellor of Embassy in the French Foreign Service. Bald, shiny headed, with a long, pointed nose, he had a delightful sense of humour. Since he refused to have anything to do with Laval or Vichy, he was on leave of absence from the Foreign Service, and he showed a most undiplomatic willingness to take chances and expose himself before the landings.

Henri d'Astier de la Vigerie, our fourth key agent in Algiers, was an important leader in the local youth movement—the *Chantier de la Jeunesse*.<sup>\*</sup> That was his cover for underground work. Slim, good-looking, fanatically royalist and devoutly Catholic, he had an almost

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\* Also one of our contacts with the head of this group, Colonel van Hecke

hypnotic effect on young people, both Catholic and Jewish. They called him 'Chief' and had a blind and mystic faith in him. His assistant and shadow, the Abbé Cordier, was a younger but equally fervent royalist, as well as a Jesuit priest. Both men, I realize in retrospect, were dangerous; both had a very odd reputation of political and even bloody intrigue behind them; both, used by the Gaullists after the landings, turned against their former American friends. At the time, I didn't realize that men of that type, straight from the Florence of the Medicis, could exist today. It was only at the time of the Darlan assassination, in which they were deeply involved, that I came to understand their potentialities.

At this point, in view of the violent criticism the United States Government received for not having used de Gaulle in the North African adventure, our position with the Gaullists must be carefully reviewed. First of all, we had a declared policy of helping anyone who was willing to oppose the Nazis. This had been our policy even before we were in the war. We had already given de Gaulle and his forces Lend-Lease by re-transfer from Great Britain under an agreement of November 1941. But in North Africa we were looking for people with influence, and de Gaulle's unpopularity there was enough by itself to make it impossible to use him. But there were also other reasons, episodes that took place in Washington itself, that made the government resolve, by 1942, to use some reserve with the Gaullist group. De Gaulle's attitude towards the United States at the time of the St Pierre and Miquelon episode, his anti-American broadcasts from Brazzaville, his lack of co-operation with us in New Caledonia in the Pacific, in fact the increasingly anti-American tone de Gaulle began to use generally caused trouble within the Gaullist mission itself in Washington that spring of 1942, just as the State Department was making its plans for North Africa.

The de Gaulle mission at Washington was made up of Etienne Boegner, Raoul de Roussy de Sales and Adrien Tixier. Roussy de Sales's and Boegner's attempts to make de Gaulle understand his responsibilities towards France and her allies were soon well known to the United States Government. Tixier, however, was the *homme de confiance* of de Gaulle. He returned from a trip to London in April 1942 expressing such violent anti-American sentiments that it undid the good that Roussy de Sales and Boegner had been able to achieve. Boegner went to London at the end of May 1942, in a final effort

to persuade de Gaulle to see the American point of view. Boegner hoped to avoid a rupture between the French National Committee in London and the United States Government before the North African landing. But all his attempts at conciliation were received by de Gaulle with total misunderstanding. The General even spoke insultingly of the American people and their war leaders. After several futile interviews, Boegner, who felt de Gaulle was fatally betraying French interests in this anti-American policy, actually resigned from the de Gaulle mission.

By this time Roussy de Sales, the second member, was fatally ill, and only the blindly loyal Tixier was left to represent the French National Committee of London in Washington.\* Episodes like these left the administration convinced, by the summer of 1942, that de Gaulle and his followers were deeply anti-American and could not be used in any operation as delicate as the North African landings.

Yet, notwithstanding de Gaulle's attitude, the State Department wished to leave no stone unturned to bring about some sort of *modus vivendi* with him. They therefore invited him to come to the United States during the summer of 1942. The invitation was transmitted through his close friend Henri de Kerillis,† a distinguished journalist and politician, who was at that time one of de Gaulle's staunchest supporters through the medium of the French newspaper *Pour La Victoire* in New York. De Gaulle refused to come unless he was to be received as the sole representative of France. This we obviously could not do because of our vital and complicated dealings with Vichy. Later in the year, yet still before our landings in North Africa, the United States Government further augmented its assistance to de Gaulle and the Free French under a new Lend-Lease agreement of 3 September 1942, by which we sent direct Lend-Lease aid to the French National Committee in London.

As late as the summer of 1942, many agencies back in Washington did not realize the full meaning of our North African adventure. Our economic-warfare people, like their British counterparts, still talked in terms of disorganizing North African economic life in order to

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\* In April 1945, Tixier, then Minister of the Interior in the de Gaulle Government, forbade the Paris Municipal Council to hold a special meeting to honour the memory of President Roosevelt. This was typical of Gaullists, and de Gaulle's own action

† See Appendix XIII, p. 293

frustrate the Germans; there was still argument and dissension during economic meetings at the State Department. These were finally quelled on a direct, handwritten order signed 'F.D.R.', as the Army began to hasten preparations for the landing.\* Only then did we begin to have whole-hearted backing in our work in Africa.

That work moved into top gear towards the end of that summer of 1942. In spite of the sordid atmosphere in Algiers it was good to be there as the time for the landings drew near. For one thing, we felt closer to France, to the underground there, and to the war itself: this increasingly rugged life in Algiers gave us at least a small sense of participating in the French struggle. For another, it was encouraging to work in close contact with Robert Murphy. Though his policies after the landing have been much debated, and were certainly debatable, no one can ever deny the lives he saved us by his skilful work before our landings, and no one who worked with him there can ever forget his steady, good-humoured piloting of our small and troubled underground. All the man's innate kindness, level-headedness and friendliness came out at a time when he had to deal with inexperienced and over-anxious Americans on the one hand and a series of Frenchmen who were too often experienced in the wrong way on the other.

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\* 'But even the President's handwritten order was ignored by the Board of Economic Warfare. The ships were not released in time to arrive before our Armed Forces did, and the urgently needed supplies did not get there for many weeks.'—MURPHY, *op. cit.*

## Make Ready for the Landing

The first hint we had that the landings were imminent came one August day when I was helping out in the code room. We were 'unbuckling', as we called it, what seemed to me just one more of hundreds of such coded cablegrams. Suddenly I read a cable asking Mr Murphy to return immediately to Washington. No more boredom in the code room; it became a passionately interesting place. No more monotony to the armistice stagnation of North Africa. Our work moved into top gear. Action we had always dreamed of but had never dared mention seemed imminent.

It wouldn't be easy: we knew that. In Morocco Noguès, for instance, would be a tough proposition under any circumstances, but particularly now after his attempt to curry favour with Laval. Murphy told me after his return of his last pre-landing talks with Noguès. These did not occur during a routine call: they were a foreshadowing of real action. But Noguès wouldn't take them seriously, he was so convinced that we weren't ready to move. Murphy asked Monsieur Chevereux, the ex-*Préfet* of Clermont-Ferrand, and a sincere friend of the Allied cause, to use his influence, based on long friendship, with Noguès. Madame Chevereux too, a remarkable woman of even sharper intelligence than her husband, undertook to persuade both General and Madame Noguès of the importance of co-operating with American forces. They failed utterly; in fact, the Noguès broke the long tie of friendship they had with the Chevereux family. Noguès considered that any American landings in North Africa would be disastrous. In Morocco we then realized we should have to work directly with Béthouart and our many contacts in the lower echelons of the French Army.

In Algiers, Rigault, d'Astier de la Vigerie and Lemaigre-Dubreuil, the men described in the last chapter, were already in touch with General Giraud, as well as with French Army men in Africa. We established a radio system with Gibraltar as its contact. The transmitter

was hidden in the house of an agent of ours down near the port. If we wanted to send a message, we hung a typewriter cover out on a balcony outside our office. Our agent had an assistant ride his bicycle by our office building three or four times a day. If the cover was there he dropped in, and we gave him a message in code.

Rumours flew hotter and faster than ever as the autumn drew on. One evening, in the autumn of 1942, three members of the Murphy mission suddenly and quietly left North Africa. Culbert left Casablanca, Rounds departed from Oran, and Knox from Algiers. They returned to those same posts on the night of 8 November, with the Allied fleets from England and the United States. One day Admiral Darlan himself came out, theoretically on an inspection trip of the whole North African Empire. Actually, I suspect, he wanted to investigate the very conflicting rumours of our landings, and of German demands to take over the defence of the French Empire. Most Aletti rumours now said we would land at Dakar. Talk of American action wasn't just an Aletti rumour, either. One day Commandant d'Orange, General Juin's *aide de camp*, told me he would like to call on Mr Murphy and have a talk with him. He wanted to know if I thought a visit to his office could be made without being detected. A few days later d'Orange appeared, inconspicuous in civilian clothes. This visit was certainly made with General Juin's full knowledge and instigation. It was a feeler to test out the force of American intentions. However it was made very late in the game, almost on the eve of our landings. It would have suited us admirably to start plotting with Juin if our landings had been scheduled for the spring of 1943 instead of November 1942. As it was we didn't dare take any more risks; we were obliged to take the Juin elements in the North African Army by surprise.

With the German difficulties in Russia, the political climate in Algiers, made up of allegiance to Vichy and general apathy, began to change. Resistance began to burn brighter even in the more resigned hearts. This growing attitude was symbolized by the noble letter that Herriot and Jeannenay wrote to Pétain on 9 September 1942, protesting his usurpation of power and the dissolution of parliamentary government in France.\* Herriot, head of the *Chambre des Députés*, and Jeannenay, head of the *Sénat*, were both in France: their letter was an act of considerable courage. De Gaulle's official newspaper,

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\* See Appendix XIV, p. 294



*La Marseillaise*,\* promptly attacked both men in terms of abuse that were almost embarrassing, and that had definite anti-democratic overtones.† On 14 September 1942, the five French Deputies in exile in the United States wrote an open letter in praise of Herriot's and Jeannenay's courageous republican stand.‡ On 3 October, Herriot was arrested by the Vichy authorities. Immediately, Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles, in a press conference in Washington, praised Herriot's courage at length and said 'I wish him well.' Finally de Gaulle, after weeks of silence since the article in his official paper criticizing Herriot's action, was forced by this strong reaction of sympathy for Herriot to praise him, too, which he did in a short statement to the British press.§ The whole episode left our diplomats worried by such deep French disunity on the very eve of our landings.

When Mr Murphy came back from Washington, I went on a 48-hour courier trip to Casablanca and motored down to Marrakesh to keep in touch with my contacts there and to pick up some warm clothes for the autumn. Driving by the Hotel Mamounia, I was surprised to see a long line of cars turning in there: cars were conspicuous by their absence in North Africa in those days. I followed them, and, as I got out of my car, a man walked up and asked me a question in German. I answered him in French, and he said, still in German: 'Aren't you one of our Mission?' 'No,' I answered, 'I am an American vice-consul.' He looked startled, but made a correct little bow and turned away. I dropped into the hotel office where the staff were friends of mine and asked what went on. I was told that a high-ranking German General, with a large staff, was touring Morocco. 'I think,' one man added, 'that the Germans intend to take over the defence of North Africa this winter.'

After dinner that night, I called on my friend, Mehdi Glaoui. He told me that he and his father, the Pasha, El Glaoui, had just entertained Noguès and Darlan, both of whom had come to Marrakesh incognito and had been dressed in civilian clothes. 'Something is going on,' he said. 'Both men seemed so tense. I think they expect Allied action. What do you think?' I told him I thought both Darlan and Noguès had been worried about a possible Allied invasion for months, and that, after all, autumn didn't seem quite the time for it. As he

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\* See Appendix XV, p. 296  
 ‡ See Appendix XVII, p. 301

† See Appendix XVI, p. 298  
 § See Appendix XVIII, p. 302

spoke, I was most interested in the fact of Darlan's presence, which hadn't yet been announced in any way. Next day, I ran into the Pasha who put both hands on my shoulders and said earnestly, but with a smile, 'My friend, last night Admiral Darlan dined with me. I think we shall soon see the events which you and I have awaited so long.' I stood silent as he got into his car, wondering how much he knew. Darlan went on south, I discovered, and when he reached Dakar it was announced for the first time that he was making a tour of the African empire.

A later courier trip back to Algiers had an exciting touch. Final arrangements had been made, at the beginning of October, for the secret meeting of General Clark and the French General Mast, General of the Region of Algiers, at that town with the wonderfully confusing name, Cherchell. In the best Bulldog Drummond tradition, M. Rigault and M. d'Astier de la Vigerie had chosen for the meeting an isolated house seventeen kilometres west of Cherchell, hung high over the Mediterranean at a spot where the sea was deep enough for a submarine. Secret cables fixed every detail ahead of time, and I knew the hour, the place, and the fact that General Clark was to come by submarine. As I flew back to Algiers on 22 October, the day set for the meeting, the plane, instead of flying inland from Oran to Algiers, as it always did, flew a hundred yards or so off the coast. The change of schedule seemed strange and suspicious to my secret-weighted mind, especially since there were two Germans and two Italians sharing the plane. I didn't dare doze off, as I usually did in an aeroplane, for fear of talking in my sleep. As we approached the house near a lighthouse where the meeting was taking place at that moment, I looked down at the Mediterranean with a hair-raising feeling that I (and the Axis men on the plane) would see the outline of a submarine just off shore. Nothing, of course, looked unusual, and the French airline personnel, who always served us loyally, had not been tipped off. The change of route was sheer accident, and the Germans unsuspecting. When we reached Algiers, I checked in at once with Felix Cole, our Consul General in Algiers, where I learned the Cherchell meeting was still going on, there having been a delay of one day due to misunderstandings.

All of the 'plotters', as we rather romantically called ourselves, gathered at Cole's villa on the night of 24 October, to wait, with Mr Cole himself, for Murphy and Knight to return from Cherchell. Cole was, as usual, calm and sensible in the midst of the tense atmosphere.

## MAKE READY FOR THE LANDING

He was a tower of strength in Algiers: tough-talking but kind-hearted, loyal always to subordinates and to our collaborators, and full of an unusual brand of common sense. I remember his saying, at about this time, when we felt a little nervous about working with such oddly-assorted French contacts: 'Why not? Just use them; don't let them use you.'

On this 24 October, Lemaigre-Dubreuil, Rigault, de St Hardouin, d'Astier de la Vigerie, John Boyd, and Miss Hardy, Murphy's secretary, were gathered in Cole's hospitable living-room. Typewriters and notebooks were ready on tables to make a record as soon as possible, both for Washington and for General Giraud. The next morning, Lemaigre-Dubreuil was going to take this report by plane to Giraud, who was staying near Lyons. There was an ominous absence of news: midnight came, and one o'clock. Three or four times we started to drive to ChercHELL, and each time we were afraid that a trip late at night might attract attention.

As the hours marched by and Murphy and Knight still didn't appear, we realized no precise report of the ChercHELL meeting for Giraud could be prepared in time for the plane taking Lemaigre-Dubreuil to France. Consequently a hasty, innocuous form of code to be used over the regular French telegraph system was prepared by the 'plotters'. Lemaigre had to take his place on the Air France plane and contact with him had to be maintained. Madame Rigault, a few days later, went over by the regular boat service between Marseilles and Algiers with more definite information for Giraud. Finally, Murphy and Knight turned up, white from mingled emotion and fatigue, and we learned in detail about their clandestine meeting.

On 17 October General Eisenhower had picked General Mark Clark to act as his deputy at this secret rendezvous. Captain Jerauld Wright of the United States Navy, Colonel Julius Holmes, who spoke French fluently, Colonel Arch Hamblen, and General Lyman Lemnitzer of G3 were chosen to go with Clark. At 7.30 a.m. they set out by plane from England and joined up at Gibraltar with the British submarine, under the command of Lieutenant N. L. A. Jewell, already standing by on orders from London. At once they set out for the African coast.

It had been arranged that a light would be in the window of the isolated house if all were well. At 4.00 a.m. on 21 October the submarine sighted the light, but with only a few hours until dawn stayed

submerged until 11.10 p.m. the next evening when once again the light shone in the window. Then the party put ashore in small kayaks accompanied by three British commando officers. Holmes landed first and promptly met up with Knight on the rocky beach, the others landed, the kayaks were hidden, and the meeting got under way. At 7.00 a.m. on the morning of 22 October General Mast, acting as Giraud's deputy, and his party arrived. Immediately General Clark set to work. The tonnage capacity of the ports of Casablanca, Algiers, Oran, Tunis, the plans of the French Navy in case of landings, the estimated capacity of French Army resistance, details of aeroplane runways and the like were given.

The owner of the house had previously given money to the Arab farmers living on his property and sent them away. The Arabs, always unpredictable, returned before they were expected and were again sent away. They became suspicious and reported to the local police that they thought strange things like smuggling or black-market activities were going on in the house. Then the night was passed between police visits, forced hiding in the cellar for the military men, a pretended drunken party on the part of Murphy and Knight as an excuse for their presence there, and finally a fight with a high wind and an angry sea that almost prevented the departure of Clark and his party in the flimsy kayaks back to the submarine. Murphy returned at 8.00 a.m. on the 24th, and the next day General Clark arrived in London minus a pair of trousers he had lost when his kayak had capsized. We sent him a coded message the next day that we had his trousers, cleaned, pressed, and waiting for him. Then with almost breathless activity we awaited D-Day.

This all-important Cherrchell meeting had been arranged to prove to the French that we meant business. Unfortunately, during all these last weeks before the landings, misunderstandings, which left their scars, arose; and some of them, anyway, were connected with this meeting.

First, the French were left believing that our landing was to take place at the end of November. No one in North Africa but Mr Murphy knew the real date and hour of the landing, and he was under orders from the War Department to reveal it to no one until a few days\* before the event.

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\* Four days, to be exact

Second, Giraud and others had been led to believe all along that there would be simultaneous landings in the south of France and North Africa. The secret French High Command, working with General Giraud, believed that it was of paramount importance to land at once in the south of France. The Germans had not yet prepared an adequate coastal defence there, and the French maintained that their military underground was strong enough to hold back the enemy until our landings were well established. By this manœuvre they believed we could take over the French fleet. They had, so the French assured us, hidden considerable stocks of arms and ammunition, and clandestinely manufactured three hundred modern tanks. Manpower was efficiently organized in hundreds of cells. I shall never forget the wires that reached us from Giraud via our Vichy Embassy just before the landings. He begged us to make the south of France the spearhead of our attack, to let France give her soil again as a battlefield to wipe out the shame of her defeat. Unfortunately we were not yet ready to undertake this major military venture. But French leaders were so desperately concentrated on the deliverance of France itself, so sure of the strength of their underground, that we let them think until the last moment that there was a possibility of action there.

Third, Giraud sincerely believed he was to be Commander-in-Chief of all Allied forces once they were on French North African soil.

At the same time General Weygand, in southern France, was also an unsuspecting victim of false information. He was in touch with Giraud as well as with British agents who assured him that landings would be made in France to coincide with North African action. Although Weygand has been severely criticized for not coming to North Africa the moment we landed there (his son is supposed to have given him bad advice on this point), there are many unknown facts that may some day prove that he felt his presence was needed in southern France.

It seems incredible in retrospect that such grave misunderstandings could have existed between us and the French, but two points must never be forgotten: first, the incredible difficulties we were working under; and, second, the inevitable mistrust that had grown up because of lack of contact and association between two groups fundamentally conservative both by force of circumstances and tradition—the Anglo-American and the French High Commands.

It was because of these misunderstandings that Giraud and the men around him deputed Mast to participate in what they thought was

the planning of a subordinate, co-ordinated action in North Africa. Giraud himself waited in France until he was told, at the last minute, of our real military programme. He had already given his chosen agents, Lemaigre-Dubreuil and Rigault, letters to certain key army men in Africa who, he felt, could be counted upon to break the armistice terms with him. Giraud had a great reputation as a soldier in North Africa, particularly in the campaign that had led to the conquest of southern Morocco. Even the Arabs said he had the *baraka*, an almost untranslatable word for mystic quality around certain individuals. Many of the men to whom he wrote came over gladly to our side.

It was the very end of October before Giraud's agent, Rigault, decided it was time for him to deliver Giraud's messages to army personnel in Morocco. He had to cover all the posts rapidly, an impossible job without a car, and we were afraid that it might attract attention if he used one of ours. Our own men in Morocco had worked very little with Rigault, whom I saw often in Algiers, so I asked Mr Murphy if I might fly to Casablanca on Monday, 2 November, and use my own car to drive Rigault around. He agreed.

Shortly before 1 November, messages from President Roosevelt had arrived by cable for the Sultan of Morocco, Resident General Noguès, the Governor General Chatel of Algiers, as well as the Resident General Estéva and the Bey of Tunis, explaining our coming actions and the motives behind them. Helping to decode them, still with a strange sensation of unreality, I knew at last that our landings were definitely scheduled for that autumn. But, I still thought, like the French themselves, that they would take place at the end of November.

Early on the morning of 2 November, before taking the plane to Casablanca, I learned the truth. I was living then at Consul Cole's house with Mr Murphy, who joined me at an early breakfast. He seemed to be under such tension beneath his calm and pleasant exterior that I said suddenly: 'Bob, am I wrong when I believe our landing will take place towards the end of November?' He nodded. I asked more questions, most of which he answered wordlessly, by nodding, and I left for the airport knowing beyond question of doubt that the landing would come the following Saturday night; at 1 a.m. in Algiers and Oran on the Mediterranean, and at 4 a.m. in Morocco at Safi, Fedala (next door to Casablanca) and Port Lyautey on the Atlantic.

When I reached our Consulate in Casablanca, before joining up

with Rigault, I found everyone in a state of intense activity. Their greatest worry was trying to perfect the radio system between Casa, Tangier and Gibraltar, to be used in communicating with our fleet. In the late afternoon, as I sat in on a meeting between Vice-Consul King and Rigault, I realized from their conversation that neither knew the exact date of the landing. Rigault had already seen General Béthouart and learned his detailed plan for placing the troops he counted on to help us during the landing: from the way he described the arrangements it was obvious that they were planning for action at the end of November.

As we started out in my car, Rigault and I, with a letter from Giraud to General Martin of Marrakesh, I worried inwardly about whether or not I should tell Rigault that these plans would have to be changed. I knew that of all the Allied landings the one in Algiers was the most important. It was the one nearest Tunisia and our eventual battlefield—unless, as we sometimes feared, the German airborne troops arrived swiftly from Sicily, France and even Spanish Morocco, and made all North Africa a battlefield. Chances were that Algiers would be the crucial point, leaving Morocco more or less behind the lines, and obliged to co-operate with us. Even so, I knew Mr Murphy felt that we could not trust Noguès. If Noguès were to order or allow vigorous resistance in Morocco, our whole plan could be delayed and even jeopardized. It would be safer if Rigault knew the exact date of the landing in order to lay plans with Giraud's military contacts in Morocco, and counteract any resistance from Noguès and the Residency. Finally, after seventy-five miles of balancing these factors, I turned to Rigault and said: 'I'm afraid you will have to change your plans with Béthouart and the other Generals. The landing in Morocco is scheduled for the early morning of 8 November.'

Rigault, in all the crises in which I saw him, never revealed any emotion. This time, he asked me to stop the car while he got out, stretched, as if he had to let his emotions come out somehow, and then climbed back in. '*Ce chameau*, Bob,' he said smiling, 'why didn't he tell me? This changes everything, everything.' Then, suddenly, he looked very grave. '*Mon Dieu!* My wife will be caught in France.' I suggested he arrange for some third party to telegraph her to take an earlier boat. He replied, 'No, I'll never do that—the risk is too great. I am certainly suspect, and she, as my wife, may be too. She knows the risks involved and will certainly understand.'

We went on to Marrakesh, where Rigault delivered his letter to General Martin and stayed very late discussing plans with him. Just before dawn we started back to Casablanca, and, without pausing for sleep, Rigault spent the next day changing his plans with Béthouart. I gave Vice-Consul Mayer the messages from President Roosevelt to the Sultan and the Resident General and told him Mr Murphy would let him know the day to deliver them. Then I discovered that some of my colleagues were planning to be away at Tangier on the date of the landing. I felt I couldn't tell anyone but Rigault the actual time of the landing, so I merely told them that Mr Murphy wanted them to stay in Casablanca as he planned to come over to hold an important meeting with them.

After dinner, Rigault, King and I composed and coded a wire for Gibraltar, to be sent on to the fleet, which was by this time steaming towards Morocco. In it, we asked the American forces to be sure to send a detachment to Rabat the minute they landed, to reinforce General Béthouart and Colonel Magnan who planned to have Noguès either with them there or their prisoner. (This inside tip was never acted upon, unfortunately, by our landing forces. Perhaps it was never received.)

In the early morning, still without sleep, Rigault and I started for Rabat, Fez, Taza, Oujda, Oran and Algiers. Just before we started, it began to pour. The rain lasted for three days—an unheard-of thing at that time of year—and the roads were so flooded that the car stopped three times, its bonnet completely under water. As we drove, our excitement grew, but so did our worry over the rain. We were afraid that the airfields might still be flooded and useless the following Saturday.

Before we left Casablanca a member of the Intelligence Bureau of the French Army warned Rigault that the Germans had heard that he was in Morocco, and that two members of the Vichy police had been sent out to look for him and arrest him. We didn't dare stop anywhere except at the houses of friends we could trust implicitly. From Monday morning, the second, therefore, until we got back to Algiers at 2 a.m. on Friday morning, we never took off our clothes or even lay down; and we drove the entire time at top speed, stopping only to contact military leaders at different garrison towns. We ate as we drove, using a basket of food a friend gave us in Rabat. As we neared Algeria the rain stopped, and the sun began to beat down with intense fiery heat.

I never knew until that day that heat could literally make your eye-



balls burn. Fifty miles from Algiers, coming down a series of hairpin bends from the mountains onto the coastal plain, I had so little strength left from struggling against sleep that I couldn't make the car take a sharp turn. It piled into the ditch, looking as tired as we felt. Our luck held! At that very moment, we heard a train whistle, jumped from the car, and ran down the hill along a little road in the direction of the sound. There we found a tiny station, and, at that moment, in came the twice-a-week train from Morocco to Algiers. Rigault hopped on, and I telephoned for help, and then went back to guard our papers until the Consulate sent a car for me.

All during our trip, Rigault had kept saying, 'Well, Ken, in less than a week, these long, hot, deserted roads will be teeming with endless military traffic. Can you believe it?' I couldn't then, but, in the months to follow, as I looked down from the air during the innumerable flights I made between Algiers and Morocco and watched hundreds of miles of endless American convoys, I often thought of Jean Rigault's remark.

As I waited, far too keyed up to sleep, in my car, for another one to come and fetch me, all the past long, dreary months went through my mind in a sort of kaleidoscopic review—the endless courier trips by air and car with diplomatic pouches, first filled with reports, then maps, and, finally, heavy with radios and other more practical objects.

Then suddenly, I was seized with apprehension. Three-quarters of the last convoy to Malta had been sunk by Axis submarines and aeroplanes. The last air attack on that heroic island had been carried out by an enemy force of nearly a thousand planes. Would our landing have the tragic consequences of just another commando raid? Was Spain really filled with Germans ready to swarm into Morocco? By the time the car came to my rescue, I had more or less relaxed into a fatalistic attitude. Whatever happened to me, I hoped I would be able to sleep, even in a German or North African prison. I had my little store of gold pieces, bought from the money-lenders of Tangier—pesetas, francs, marks, dollars, and two gold watches that somehow or other I hoped to take to my imaginary prison and then, after a restful sleep, to use in bribing my way out.

The next day, Friday, and all day Saturday, the last before the landing, we burned endless papers, destroyed codes, hid records, wound up endless details. We made very sure that, in case the Germans did forestall us and we were made prisoners, none of our friends' names would

#### ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

be found in our possession. Late on Saturday afternoon, Murphy, Woodruff and I tried to decide where to hide three small packages of personal papers and valuables. Finally, we took them cautiously down the street to the headquarters of a group of French women ambulance drivers. They had done magnificent work during the war in 1940, and later with prisoners. They had come to North Africa with Weygand, to await the day when they could return and help in the liberation. We handed the packages to Nicole de Brignac, the gallant leader of these women, and asked her if she could look after them for us. '*Certainement*,' she said. She took them in her hand to the window and stood there a moment looking north over the bay of Algiers. 'I don't intend to leave this window the rest of the night,' she said, smiling up at us. 'I think at last I am going to see the thing for which I have lived and prayed these last terrible years.'

## This Is It

Great events are seldom bigger than life. Instead, they are a mosaic of small, odd, humorous or irritating details: the heel off the shoe, the missed appointment, the cup of coffee while waiting for the next thing to happen. The Landing—the great event we had looked forward to, dreamed of, worked for during the past year and a half—had this confused, rushed, episodic quality for our underground on shore.

Murphy and a few of us dined at Felix Cole's apartment on the night of 7 November, going over all the things that might, and probably would, go wrong. We didn't realize that many, perhaps most, of the Vichyite forces were going to resist the landings, in spite of our carefully spotted collaborators. And yet we already knew their psychology. They had authoritarian minds, to begin with, ready to follow the 'head of the state', whoever he might be. Many of them, in addition, shared the genuine devotion of so many Frenchmen to Pétain, the blind faith that he was doing what was best for France, that he would somehow bring her battered ship of state through this engulfing storm. Many had an almost neurotic fear of commando raids, of Anglo-American hit-and-run actions, without sufficient strength, which would simply bring the Germans in full force into North Africa. Most of the top men had given a soldier's oath of honour to the Germans in return for their freedom, an oath that they would not bear arms against Germany. Juin had given this oath, but we believed he would not feel held by it. (Giraud, of course, had refused to do this and was a free agent.)

The vast majority loathed the Nazis and longed for an Allied victory; but equally it must be admitted they were politically timid, afraid to climb out on any limb until they were sure it would bear their official strength. All this combination of Pétainist feeling, anti-German feeling, rigidity, and rather unattractive caution, produced exactly what could be expected: a night of unexampled, sometimes funny, and sometimes tragic, confusion.

About 10.30 that night we went down to our secret headquarters for the landing: the apartment of a distinguished Jewish doctor, Professor Henri Aboulker, at 26, Rue Michelet, the main street of Algiers. We were surprised, with the secret on our minds, to see the usual Saturday-night crowds streaming down Rue Michelet on their way to the cinema (American films, of course, were banned) or waiting in line for the infrequent buses. There had been a lot of talk in Vichy papers and radios about the vast convoy that had been observed at Gibraltar, supposedly preparing for Malta, but most people believed our first action would be in Dakar. Algiers looked calm and normal.

At 26, Rue Michelet, crowds of young men from our underground and from the *Chantier de la Jeunesse* groups under d'Astier de la Vigerie milled around the Aboulker apartment, in a very French setting of crowded fumed oak (dining-room) and crowded gilt-and-tapestry (living-room). In a bathroom off one of the bedrooms, full of lacework and curly maple, stood our secret wireless system. Some of these younger civilians had formed part of the original resistance group of North Africa, starting in Oran: they were the action wing for the group of older anti-Nazis headed by Abbé Cordier and Colonel van Hecke and other less-known men. Some of them, mostly Jewish, belonged to a group which used to meet secretly with Vice-Consuls Boyd and Knox at Guy Cohen's clothing store in Rue Michelet: a fiercely resistant group including José Aboulker, René Brunel, André Achiary, Bernard Karsenty and Pierre Alexandre as leaders. Few of these men gathered in Aboulker's apartment had taken part in the larger military planning: they were coming on the scene now for their own special job: taking over key points in Algiers and acting as guides as we landed. Vice-Consuls Woodruff, Boyd and Laroux, a career man, waited with them for final assignment to spots like the power station, the telephone offices, and the landing beaches. Two doors down, at 30, Rue Michelet, in Pierre Alexandre's apartment, our Army and over-all agents, like Lemaigre-Dubreuil, waited to discuss last minute details with Murphy.

At about midnight the young men who were to seize key points in Algiers left, and later the others went off with Woodruff, Boyd and Laroux to the various landing beaches to act as guides for the debarking forces. Towards twelve-thirty Murphy asked me to go with him to the Villa des Oliviers, above Algiers at El Biar. In this ancient, square, yellow Arab palace lived General Juin, the powerful, physically

courageous but politically timid head of the entire French Forces in North Africa. Murphy got into a car with Colonel Crétien, the quiet-mannered, cautious head of Juin's *Deuxième Bureau*, or Intelligence Section. I followed in Murphy's own car with a bodyguard who had been assigned to Murphy for the evening by the resistance forces of 26, Rue Michelet. When the first car drove past the sentry boxes, with their huge black Senegalese guards, and into the gravelled courtyard, I waited outside as prearranged, ready to notify our friends if things went wrong. As I had had little sleep since Monday, I closed my eyes on the dimly seen flower gardens, the view of Fort l'Empereur with its great obelisk, and asked the guard to let me know if anyone went in or out of the villa. I must have slept about twenty minutes when Colonel Crétien himself awakened me (the guard, who had the mind as well as the physique of a gorilla, had been placidly enjoying the view) and called me in to Mr Murphy. Murphy asked me to drive over to the Victorian villa of Admiral Fenard, the man who had handled many negotiations with us after Weygand was pulled back to France. (He was later head of the French Naval Mission in Washington.) I was to pick up Darlan, who was staying there, and Admiral Battet, his intimate friend and his Chief of Staff.

Darlan and Battet ran down the steps of the villa soon after I got there, and climbed into Murphy's Buick with me. Darlan evidently feared no plot at this time—he hardly looked at me and never even glanced at our gorilla, who was sitting beside me, armed to the teeth. I dropped them at the door of Juin's villa and this time waited at the door in case I was needed. Soon after Darlan went in, the house was surrounded by guards from our own underground. I knew nothing of this until General Sevez, Chief of Staff to Juin, tried to leave the villa. A young man armed with a rifle told him he could not go farther than the car where I sat. Sevez, startled and angry, went back into the villa, and then I could see, looking around the shrubbery by the house, that the place was alive with armed civilians commanded by a reservist, a Lieutenant Pauphilet, in uniform.

The over-all commander of these amateur troops I learned later was Henri d'Astier, who was to be intimately involved in the post-landing intrigues around Darlan. They surged forward under the half-light from the villa entrance, pointing their guns from the waist. In a moment Colonel Crétien, Juin, Madame Juin and Murphy himself appeared at the villa door, with Darlan and Battet behind them in the

hall. All looked surprised and disturbed. Crétien commanded the officer in charge to step forward, but he refused. They called to each other from a distance through the dark: the officer said no one and nothing could leave the house except Mr Pendar in the car he was driving. Everyone retired in good order into the villa and, after a hurried conference, Murphy came back and told me to drive to town, find out who had placed the watch dogs and have them called off—or at least get permission for one of the French officers at Juin's villa to leave in the car with me. Murphy was obviously playing for time. At this juncture, Crétien turned to Murphy and said pompously: 'If these are your friends, they are behaving in a *most* disgusting way.'

I drove back to 26, Rue Michelet and tried to see General Mast or Colonel Jousse to ask them if they were responsible for the guard around Juin's house. (At this point, I also got rid of my gun and the guard, both more of a liability than an asset.) I found our secret headquarters in a terrific state of excitement. Reports poured in from the young men we had sent out to take the Post Office, radio station, electric power station, telegraph office and the *Préfecture*. The entire town of Algiers was actually in our hands without the people realizing that anything had happened. Now everyone was waiting to hear from our landings. Everyone asked me if Crétien was with us: as head of Juin's Intelligence Bureau, he was a key man, and he had played an elusive game with both sides.

At headquarters, I found my old friend Rigault, paler and tighter-mouthed than ever. He got into the car with me and drove back to Juin's villa. Darlan asked him for permission to return to Admiral Fenard's to sleep, but Rigault refused. Murphy drew me aside and told me to go back to town and not to hurry. He was stalling for time until we actually landed, he said: then his bargaining power would, of course, be much greater. Darlan was beginning to talk politics, he added, and it looked as if Darlan himself, the officers who recognized his authority, and the vital French fleet, might all fall into our hands. Juin, it seemed, wanted to help us but felt obliged to defer to Darlan as his superior officer.

I dropped Rigault at 30, Rue Michelet, where de Saint Hardouin was waiting for him. We decided that it was now time to tell Admiral Fenard that our underground had seized every key point in Algiers. We drove up to his villa. On the way, we had to refuse a lift to a young sailor running up the road with a dog. Something about him

made me uneasy, and we learned later that he was a messenger who had been sent by Naval Headquarters at the Hotel St George to warn the authorities against us.

When we reached Fenard's villa, we found him fully dressed and puffing on his pipe. Half-dressed sailors, on night duty, were wandering in and out of the house in considerable confusion. As we talked, Madame Fenard's anxious face, above a black kimono, peered through the *portières* from the hall. We told Fenard what had happened: that Algiers had been taken over by our underground, and that the Americans were landing along the Moroccan and Algerian coasts. Fenard shifted his pipe in his mouth two or three times, looked at us intently, and then slowly broke into a smile and said: '*Rudement bien joué.*' Then, thinking of the man who was his superior and to whom he owed his career, he laid his hand earnestly on my arm and added: 'But don't let anything happen to Darlan.'

We drove Fenard back to Juin's villa, and he and de Saint Hardouin joined the conference inside. Darlan, obviously suffering from great emotion, was still pacing the floor and debating what he should do. Murphy reminded him that he had promised Admiral Leahy in 1941 that if the Americans ever came in great strength we could count on him. Darlan came back again and again to the fact that he had sworn a solemn oath to Pétain, that Pétain would have to release him or back him.

After some time, Admiral Fenard asked me to go down to town and send a telegram from Admiral Darlan to Marshal Pétain. The officer of our underground guard around the villa said I could take a telegram, but only 'in clear' (i.e. not in code). I was handed a sealed envelope and de Saint Hardouin and I started back to town. I asked de Saint Hardouin to open the envelope and read the telegram to me as I drove, but he waited until we reached 26, Rue Michelet and then had one of our experts steam it open. We read the telegram which ran more or less as follows: 'Late at night, I received a telephone call to come to General Juin's house, where I found myself in the presence of M. Murphy. He told me that the American fleet was off the North African coast in force. I told him I had given my word to you, the Chief of State, that I would defend the Empire with our fullest force against anyone infringing upon it. DARLAN.'

Needless to say, the telegram was not sent. I can't believe Darlan ever thought it would be.

At this point, President Roosevelt's broadcast announcing the landings had been heard both in Morocco and Algiers. It came a little prematurely in Morocco, as our landings were scheduled for several hours later there and it apparently gave the Vichy forces too much warning. In Algiers, things were already well under way.

I drove back to Juin's villa, this time alone, and asked Murphy if he had read the telegram from Darlan. He said: 'No.' I told him what it contained, and he said that he didn't care, at this point, what Darlan said to Pétain. Then he asked me if there were any word from the American landings. It was now between 3.30 and 4.00 in the morning, and there was no word yet from our forces. Rumour had it that they had landed near Cape Matifou, but the guides we had sent to the appointed beaches had not yet seen any landing parties. Later we were told that the transports had missed the landing spots near Algiers and hit some 25 to 30 kilometres away.\* No motorized transport had been provided, because the Americans were supposed to land immediately outside the city. By the time the troops hiked into Algiers on foot, it was six in the morning.

I have always suspected—though I have absolutely no proof of this—that the 'mistake' was deliberate. The British and American Navies do not generally drift that far off their course. I suspect that both the British and American authorities at home were far from confident about our collaborators, and that they simply did not trust them not to betray the exact point of the landings. The military authorities were, also, of course, trying to conceal the fact that the British were taking part in the invasion—a fact that would have increased antagonism in North Africa if it had been known at the time. It is significant that a pre-landing date with us and our underground was never kept. Secret wires from Gibraltar promised to deliver by boat small arms to our resistance groups several days before the landing. Picked young men went down night after night to the beaches mentioned in these wires, but the boats never arrived.†

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\* The Royal Navy, which was responsible for landing the entire expeditionary force, explained that an error in navigation occurred in the darkness. But the Royal Navy was so familiar with this Algerian shore that many persons believed the landings were made on an undisclosed beach on purpose, to guard against possible treachery in the French underground.—MURPHY, *op. cit.*

† According to Murphy, he and Colonel Eddy have always been at a loss to explain the failure of supplies for the patriot group to arrive. Evidently the



When I talked to Murphy, we did not know for certain that the troops had landed. As we stood in the gravel driveway, Admiral Fenard came out of the house again and handed me a second telegram from Darlan to the Marshal. He asked me if the first one had gone, and I replied, evasively I fear, that I had given it to be sent. He urged me to speed the second one on its way. As I backed the car away from the villa, Murphy ran after me and told me to be sure to get in touch with the fleet by radio as soon as I got back to Algiers, and urge them to get troops into Algiers at once, to back his arguments with Darlan with something more than moral persuasion. I asked him to dictate the message, and copied it carefully in my small black notebook: 'Western Task Force Commander from Murphy. It is urgently necessary that some Allied troops arrive in the city of Algiers as quickly as possible. Situation well in hand but unwise to let this endure too long.' I said, 'Allied? You mean American, don't you?' He repeated firmly, 'Allied.' This was the first knowledge I had that the British were actually landing with us.

As I swung the car around to leave, troops of the Vichy *Garde Mobile* suddenly burst through the gates to the villa and surrounded us, seized our little civilian guard from around the house and took them, Mr Murphy and myself into the porter's lodge by the gates to the villa. Serious as the whole business was, it had an *opera buffa* quality, and reminded me irresistibly of the *Pirates of Penzance*. I knew, however, that both sides in North Africa had itching trigger fingers and few scruples, and I had an authentic chill up my spine as they lined us up in front of the fireplace and told us to keep our hands up. We were thoroughly searched and stripped of our papers. One soldier said a few words in German to us, and I was so tired by this time that I thought wildly that they might be German troops in French uniforms. All of us, however, behaved with great dignity, I thought. Mr Murphy was extremely pale, and he assured me that I was. He told me later than as he had been taken into the porter's lodge after me he had heard the order given to take us both out and shoot us. Luckily, this item had escaped me or I couldn't have answered for my dignity.

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American command felt that there was a risk that our plans would be disclosed or that the arms might be used against our own forces. *Our Vichy Gamble*, by William L. Langer; Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1947

In a moment the Commandant d'Orange, Juin's aide, rushed into the room, dressed oddly in a civilian brown tweed suit, wildly waving a huge revolver and crying: 'What have you done? What have you done?' Some of the soldiers tried to arrest him, and he turned on them in a fury, crying, 'I am the Commandant d'Orange, and you are under my orders.' Then he turned back to Murphy and me, and said: 'You know my sentiments; what made you do this idiotic thing?' Neither of us said anything: the man was so excited that he wouldn't give us time to answer, and wouldn't have listened if we had. In the midst of this Gallic scene, Juin, Fenard and Crétien appeared at the door, and said that Murphy must be brought back to the villa at once. Murphy and d'Orange asked them to include me, and Juin agreed. 'I regret having to do this,' he added formally to Murphy, 'but your action in making me a prisoner in my own house necessitates it.'

As we came out of the porter's lodge, Fenard remembered the telegram to Pétain and said it was imperative that it get off at once. I said everything had been removed from my pockets when I was searched. There was another frenzy while troops and officers searched the lodge for my things: no telegram. I looked in my pockets: the *Garde Mobile* had characteristically taken everything *but* the telegram, which was still there. Surrounded by three *Garde Mobile* soldiers with sub-machine-guns, I climbed into Murphy's car and started for the Admiralty. As we drove down the hill, one soldier said happily to another: '*Enfin*, we are getting out of this filthy situation we have been in for two years. Now, we shall fight the Boches.' 'I hope you are going to,' I said, in French. The soldier looked surprised, and said a few words in German. I explained to him that I could understand English or French better. 'What are you anyway?' he said startled. Realizing at last why they had looked so bloodthirsty and spoken German to us in the porter's lodge at the villa, I said: 'American.' They looked at each other in amazement. 'What are we doing here?' one said. 'What indeed,' I said unhappily.

At the Admiralty, I insisted on delivering the wire to Admiral Leclerc in person, to whom it was addressed. Calm and dignified, he opened it very deliberately, read it and said: 'What proof have I that this is Admiral Darlan's signature?' 'You have only my word,' I said, 'but I will be delighted to take anyone you suggest to Admiral Darlan to confirm it.' 'I will do that,' he said, 'but you will remain here.'

He called in a young officer to guard me, and left the office saying that he must now, in view of the situation, take command of operations. For an hour and a half the officer and I sat smoking and talking. Outside, we could hear the Admiralty guns as they fired, intermittently, on a British commando ship which had forced an entrance into the port with some American troops on board. It was grim to sit there, inside the Vichy citadel, knowing that it was firing on Americans. I learned later that sixty men from a Minnesota regiment were killed. As we waited, we talked politics, and I remembered the mingled feeling of relief and sadness with which I at last was able to speak freely, to tell this Vichy officer of all we felt and believed. My remarks about Pétain were long and pointed.

About 6 a.m., Admiral Leclerc came back into the room and told me I was free to leave. 'I regret that I am not able to offer you breakfast,' he added, 'but we are excessively busy at this moment. I hope,' he added with a gesture over my head, 'that you have not spent too painful a time under the shadow of our esteemed Marshal.' I turned and saw that I had been sitting the entire time under a magnificent, larger-than-life bust of Pétain.

Outside, I started for 26, Rue Michelet to report, and then realized I was in Murphy's car which was too well known in Algiers and might reveal our secret headquarters. I stopped in the street behind Rue Michelet next to Cole's car. I asked his chauffeur, an Arab named Sikki, where Mr Cole was. He didn't know, so I tried 26, Rue Michelet. When I knocked on the dark door of Aboulker's apartment I was startled to have it opened by an enormously tall soldier in full battle dress. I hadn't seen our uniform before, and for a moment I thought he was a German. Then I heard a pleasant midwestern drawl, as the soldier asked, 'Are you an American?' I assured him I was. He continued: 'They tell me I'm the first American soldier in Algiers. They're keeping me here until they're sure how these nervous French are going to take to us, so I'm standing guard on a drunk in here.' I went into the apartment and found that the drunk was one of our control officers, a recent pre-landing acquisition, out colder than almost anyone I have ever seen. I remembered that he had seemed a little pale at the meeting the night before. He was shipped home soon after this unheroic performance on D-Day. The soldier and the drunk were the only two humans left in what a few hours before had been a teeming headquarters.

I returned to Mr Cole's chauffeur, Sikki, and asked him to come with me and help me find Mr Cole. We went around to Rue Michelet and started up the hill towards the Consulate at No. 119. Halfway there, I was arrested again. Another troop of the *Garde Mobile* surrounded me, and, when they found out who I was, put an armed guard in Murphy's car with me and sent me off to the barracks of the Fifth Regiment of the *Chasseurs d'Afrique*, the faithful Sikki following.

When I got there, I explained to the Colonel that I had already been thoroughly arrested and investigated and that I wanted to get back to Juin's villa. He went to check up, leaving me with a junior officer in the officers' common room. Morning had come: it was almost 7 a.m. and light outside. We drank coffee and I tried to relax. Around us the barracks were humming with activity. Tanks rumbled by; ambulances drove in, manned and ready. A few aeroplanes roared overhead, and there was the sound of ack-ack fire. A Frenchwoman I knew came in with one of the ambulances and spoke to me. In a way that symbolized all the confusion of that day, she told me, as I sat there in custody, of how happy she was at our landing, of what a glorious day this was for France. A moment later, an officer came up to tell me that Juin had ordered my release. 'I am delighted to give you your liberty,' he said, 'and hope this is only the first of many acts of service I may render the Americans.'

Cautiously getting a pass this time from the Colonel, I drove up to Cole's house to wash and shave. I broke the good news to the Polish waitress and the Austrian cook, who wept with joy. Then I went next door to the little English church by the villa to offer what I hoped would not be a premature thanksgiving. Frustrating as so many things that day, the church was closed.

Outside, the streets were not crowded, but I met a good many excited and rather mystified passers-by, all streaming towards the harbour. It was a lovely, clear, cool morning.

Harry Woodruff came into Cole's villa as I dressed to pick up some clothes and shaving things for Murphy, who was still at Juin's villa and not allowed to leave. We packed a small bag, snatched a bottle of Scotch and drove over to Murphy who was waiting for us, tired and white after a night of arguing with Darlan. It was now only too evident that Giraud, though he was admired by all the secret pro-Allied forces in North Africa, which included most of the Army, was not going to be able to take the heads of that Army into our camp with

him. We would have to have Juin and the others, and to get them we would have to have Darlan. With true French logic, everything had to follow legitimate succession. Darlan was holding off to see how strong our forces were going to prove to be.

After Murphy had had a shave and we had all had a drink, we went downstairs under the disapproving eye of Madame Juin, an Algerian heiress with a reputation of adhering to the strictest neutrality. Downstairs, Crétien, Fenard and another officer waited for us. Juin himself was at Fort l'Empereur. As we lunched, Murphy left the table from time to time to confer with people. We could see a great fire burning down near the port, and hear a constant sound of firing. Three American dive-bombers swooped down over the port and the Admiralty as we ate. In the midst of our first bombing, Fenard said, over and over again, as we stepped outside on the terrace and watched the intermittent fire of the Vichy forces, 'This must be stopped. This is absolutely ridiculous. We must stop the firing.' He was only voicing what everyone thought.

Darlan was finally convinced that the Americans were coming in force. He intimated that he was ready to talk business as soon as he could have his trusted Admiral Battet at his side. Battet had been taken prisoner some time during the night by our local resistance forces.

Fenard asked me to drive down and get Battet. This time, I asked Commandant d'Orange, who reappeared at the villa, to give me a pass. I was tired of being arrested. D'Orange had recovered from his hysteria of the night before. Calm and suave in an immaculate new uniform, he, too, was convinced that the Americans were there to stay, and was as affable as if we were lunching together at one of the near-by black-market restaurants. He took me down to Fort l'Empereur to get a pass. In the big conference room there I waited and listened to the officers carrying on telephone conversations from all over North Africa. It was a grim moment, in Juin's headquarters, to see French generals and colonels receiving news of French resistance all along the coast. I remember hearing Sevez answer a call from Oran, with the news that things were going badly for the French at Arzew, outside Oran, but that everything was going well for the Vichyites in the town proper. A bulletin from Morocco said that the Americans had tried to land at Safi but had been repulsed, and that there was very severe fighting going on at Port Lyautey and near Casablanca. At that

moment, d'Orange came back with my pass and urged me to find the American commanding general to talk terms at once. I knew from this that Juin wanted an armistice, as d'Orange never took responsibility except under Juin's orders.

I had no idea where to find Battet, whom our side was keeping in custody much as their side kept Murphy. The streets were full of French soldiers, and the *Garde Mobile* seemed to be besieging the Post Office, which, of course, was held by our men.

Not knowing where to go, I went on over to the Police Station on Boulevard Boudin. I knew the police were friendly to us. Inside, a seething mass of civilians, soldiers and police were milling around the bloodstained body of a tall French colonel. D'Astier and Abbé Cordier were the only controlled people present. They told me Battet had been released several hours before. It was then 3.30 p.m.

Since no one seemed to know where Battet could be, I decided to try to locate the American commanding general for d'Orange and Juin. This time I tried Borj-el-Ahmin, the villa of Roger de Sinety, where our secret radio station was hidden. Cole and Boyd were there, and told me the Allies were at Sidi-Ferruch. We got into our cars, and they guided me until I was safely on the back road to our beaches. It was a big moment to see the little harbour off Cheragas filled with what seemed to be hundreds of grey ships, the roads filled with companies of Americans marching to Algiers. (Paradoxically the Allies were landing in almost the same spot where a hundred years before the French had landed.) In every little crossroad town, Arabs and French had lined the roadside to watch them. The Arabs were particularly fascinated by the commandos with their black faces: they thought they were a new and interesting type of native.

At his temporary headquarters, behind a roadside hedge under a tree, I found our commanding General Ryder, a very tall, thin, stooped and handsome man, with great personal charm. General Mast and, surprisingly, Captain Randolph Churchill, son of the Prime Minister, were with him. He gave me his terms: easy ones if the French surrendered at once, tough if they didn't, and a postscript that Murphy must be present at all negotiations. I started back to Algiers. Near Juin's villa, I met Murphy on his way to find Ryder, too. We turned back together, got Ryder, turned again, and met d'Orange just leaving El Biar to surrender Fort l'Empereur to us on behalf of the French.

The surrender was wonderfully French, like a historical painting in

some European museum. D'Orange stood before six French soldiers, lined up in arrow shape, and handed the sword of surrender by the blade, hilt extended, to General Ryder, announcing that with this sword he surrendered Fort l'Empereur, and the city of Algiers, to the American General.

As we drove down to the Fort, Colonel O'Daniel's artillery were firing tracer bullets over our cars, ready to open fire in earnest. Just then, the 'cease fire' signal for the French was sounded by trumpets, with great bravura, from the windows of General Juin's two American-made limousines. Happily, the cease fire reached the American artillery just in time. Inside the Fort we sat in a big room while Ryder, Juin, Darlan, and Murphy negotiated in an inside office. French officers, looking solemn, stood along the opposite wall. The American officers asked me to urge the Frenchmen to sit down. They didn't do this, but remained standing still in a silence that I realized (since I knew many of them personally) came from a genuine shyness of defeat rather than from unfriendliness. Their complex and, to the American public, inexplicable psychology became plainer to me weeks later when I visited a hospital in Morocco, full of soldiers who had lost arms or legs in the battles during the landing. There was no resentment or bitterness in their hearts. They were thrilled to see an American visitor and were smiling, friendly and amazingly pro-American. They had fought as soldiers, in a tradition of great discipline, and were delighted to have lost.

Between 5.30 and 6.00 p.m., Algiers was finally officially surrendered. Then I chauffeured Colonel (now General) O'Daniel around the city while he sent American soldiers back to their temporary barracks, and told isolated groups of French soldiers and aviators that it was all over. In one place, a rather ardent-looking soldier worried me by pointing his gun at us in much too businesslike a way. I stopped the car quickly and O'Daniel walked calmly up to him and told him what had happened. Afterwards, I said to O'Daniel, 'You are remarkably calm when people wave guns at you.' He replied negligently, 'Oh, they always shoot at the driver when they want to stop a car.' I felt distinctly more nervous for the rest of the trip.

Finally, O'Daniel, a tough Irishman with disarmingly good manners in dealing with the French, cleaned up the last outpost, and we headed back to town. As darkness settled over Algiers, the shooting was over. Allied ships were already heading into the big harbour.

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

Algiers was once more on our side in the war. It was the end of a long road for us. Yet though the city seemed calm, it was a false calm. With the military phase successfully finished, we were heading into much stormier political waters.



## Webs of Intrigue

On the surface, after our landings, everything was serene in Algiers, except for the outraged cries of the great landowners whose villas were promptly requisitioned. American troops poured ashore and were met with wild enthusiasm. The harbour was full of Allied shipping. Restaurants and the newly established inter-Allied club were packed with French, British and Americans fraternizing. The town had an almost holiday air as the Army prepared itself for the big push to the east in Tunisia. We even, in those early days, thought this victory would be a quick one.\*

But underneath this reassuring surface, Algeria was seething with political intrigue. Too long, the Vichy government had kept that most political people, the French, in a sort of hermetically sealed vacuum. When we opened the door, every political wind rushed in with us and, eventually, blew us off our diplomatic feet.

Two things must be remembered, to explain if not excuse the rather ignoble record of some Frenchmen in North Africa both before and after our landings. One was the tragic fact that France was in German hands, and that their own actions could involve many friends and relatives on the mainland. They were like men trying to fight an underworld which held hostages from their own families. The second thing was that legalism and the chain of command meant everything to French Army and Navy men. Mast, Béthouart, Giraud himself, were not, in the eyes of the generals and admirals in North Africa, patriots fighting on the right side. They were professionals who had

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\* When Murphy asked Eisenhower how long he expected to use Algiers as a headquarters he replied that 'if we can hang on after arrival' he would like to move eastward in about six weeks. As events turned out, Allied Force Headquarters in Algiers mushroomed to over six thousand persons (he originally calculated a headquarters of about two hundred members) who remained in Algiers for twenty months, and Eisenhower himself stayed in that city for more than a year.—MURPHY, *op. cit.* It took six months of fighting to be victorious in Africa.

betrayed the military tradition, 'generals in dissidence', almost traitors, because they had dealt with a foreign power—even a friendly one—instead of implicitly obeying the head of their own state. It is hard for Americans, especially civilian Americans, to understand this extraordinary point of view, but it was an absolutely sincere one. Obedience to the legal head of the state was ingrained in every French military and naval mind as a part of his own honour, both as a man and as a patriot. It was a rare man who could break this tradition.

These two facts, plus the abiding French fear that we wouldn't arrive in enough strength to keep the Germans permanently out of North Africa, accounted for a lot of our disappointments and disillusionments immediately after the landings, as we tried to get the North African French into line. Their record from the eighth to the twelfth of November was not an attractive one.

Darlan, smooth-faced and imperturbable, was in full command, living in the Fenards' villa but having his G.H.Q. down in the town. Giraud remained at Lemaigre-Dubreuil's villa, with a guard of our own underground to prevent 'incidents'. General Clark arrived on the evening of the ninth and installed his headquarters at the Hotel St George. He and Darlan set to work on the negotiations that grew into the Clark-Darlan Agreements, which were the scaffolding of our whole effort in North Africa.\* Controlling all this first negotiating was the urgent order from London and Washington: 'Get the French fleet at any price.' Poor General Mast, who had acted for us and for Giraud, was swept aside by French officialdom. He was, like Giraud, *un général en dissidence*. Darlan was negotiating with us purely, he said, as the legal representative of Vichy.

Morocco went on resisting until 11 November. Pétain, so Darlan and Noguès claimed, had finally removed Darlan, thinking him a prisoner of the Americans, and put Noguès in charge of all North Africa. Poor Béthouart, instead of capturing Noguès, had been captured by that shrewd and experienced operator. When Noguès finally surrendered, on the eleventh, he claimed that he had had a second secret message from Vichy announcing that because Pétain had learned Darlan was not a prisoner but a free agent, Darlan was in

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\* Under the agreements, as finally signed, we had full charge, but promised an eventual complete restoration of French sovereignty, while Darlan in return promised complete co-operation

charge again. This mysterious message coincided nicely with the fact that the American Army and Navy were within two minutes of starting a mammoth bombardment of Casablanca.

On the evening of the tenth, when Darlan announced that Pétain had removed him, he asked to be put in custody to show that his further co-operation with us was a forced one. In the meantime, the Germans moved into Unoccupied France, a violation of the Armistice terms which Darlan, Juin and Noguès finally decided released them from all moral obligations to Vichy and to their oaths of surrender.

Darlan soon produced both successes and failures for us. He was able eventually to bring Dakar and all West Africa into line, a very helpful thing, as we were still operating on a military shoestring and a good deal of our tough talk was sheer bluff. Darlan failed, on the other hand, in his effort to get Tunis to resist the Germans, and his cable urging the fleet at Toulon to come over was answered classically (and vulgarly) by Admiral de la Borde or one of his officers in the single, untranslatable word: '*Merde.*'

General Clark set to work to bring Giraud back into the picture. We needed Darlan politically—that was obvious to everyone who saw the reaction of the French on the scene—but we still wanted Giraud to work with us in the coming campaigns. I took several messages to Giraud, a tall, dignified figure out at Lemaigre-Dubreuil's, where he still waited, under guard, for his assignment. On the evening of the tenth Giraud conferred with Juin, Clark and some subordinate military figures. He realized then that the chief men in North Africa had not followed and were not, for the moment, going to follow his leadership. This was a bitter disappointment to him as well as to us, but he took it like a man. He begged us to enlist Darlan or anyone else who could win over the Army and Navy officials.

Giraud was a disarming, rather touching figure. I have never seen a man with a greater flame of patriotism, or a more transparent, almost childlike, honesty. This childlike quality was fatal in the end, politically speaking. To Giraud, any Frenchman, especially any Frenchman in uniform, was evidently and obviously a fine fellow. He judged others by himself, as so many honest men do, loathed politics, and had an abiding faith that Frenchmen could put their differences aside and march together to win the war. He simply never grasped the fact that other Frenchmen insisted on making, or at least trying to make, the postwar pattern for France then and there. De Gaulle, to him, was a

general, a Frenchman and anti-German; Darlan was equally an admiral, a Frenchman and anti-German.

On 11 November, however, Darlan suddenly, and without telling us, revoked his orders sending up soldiers to Tunisia against the Germans and picked the cards up generally from the table. The French generals were deeply resentful over Giraud's appointment, and wanted to hold everything in suspense until Noguès arrived from Morocco. He was coming over, after his surrender, by plane. In extenuation of the French stalling at this point, it must be remembered that they were all suffering from an acute inferiority complex, feeling put upon and pushed around. First, the Germans had taken their pride away; now, the Americans wanted to dictate to them, too. They sulked and grew shifty, as people will when their pride is hurt.

Noguès finally reached Algiers on the evening of the eleventh and came directly to headquarters at the Hotel St George. I was there, waiting to act as interpreter. Most of the top-ranking French officers were waiting there, too—among them, Juin and Giraud. It was painful to anyone who loved France to see that meeting. Noguès came into the room, tense, tired and strained. He nodded and spoke to all the officers but Giraud. Someone said: 'But you know General Giraud.' Giraud stepped forward with his hand out, only to have Noguès turn on his heel saying: 'I do not know a general in dissidence.' Feeling as embarrassed as an outsider at a family quarrel, I left the room and waited outside in the corridor, filled with French and American guards. In a few minutes, all the French officers came out, and Juin, before everyone, stepped up to Noguès and said: '*Assez de votre sale politique*, Noguès. Now we are going to fight the Germans.'

I went on into Clark's office to interpret. Noguès had brought Commandant Bataille with him as his interpreter. The interview was an unpleasant one. Noguès had no intention of bringing Morocco into the war on our side. He proposed merely to give us 'the right of passage': exactly the amount of co-operation, in other words, that Vichy gave the Germans on the Syrian airports. Noguès seemed really afraid for French, and for his own, sovereignty in Morocco. His tenseness and unhappiness went far beyond that of the other Vichy leaders in North Africa at this time. He kept saying that he would have to send Bataille by plane to see Pétain and get some personal word from him. He felt it vitally important to try to discover the Marshal's secret thoughts.



Mr Churchill and General de Gaulle reviewing troops at Marrakesh



Generals Giraud and de Gaulle seen shortly after the latter's arrival in North Africa



Collaboration—Pétain with Laval in 1942



Admiral Darlan with Generals Eisenhower and Clark



I admired Clark enormously throughout that interview. He was completely calm and pleasant, but he knew that, with the Germans actually in Vichy, it would be fantastic to let an emissary fly there. He said to me: 'Will you please impress it upon General Noguès, once and for all, that there can be no question of communicating with Vichy. We have broken relations with that government. In our eyes it no longer exists. We are not even interested in learning its views.'

Finally, after long talks with all the French leaders, Clark insisted that Giraud be called in to hear the American ultimatum in their presence. If they didn't co-operate fully, he said, and if they didn't accept Giraud, he would simply take full military control and proceed as if in an enemy country. As usual, in North Africa, toughness worked where reason failed: we had no trouble with the Vichy military leaders from then on. Diplomatically, we might well have learned a lesson from this successful strong talk on the part of General Clark.

I remember riding out to the airport with Murphy the day he flew to Gibraltar to discuss the Darlan deal with Eisenhower and secure his agreement. There was no question but that Murphy was well aware of the criticism that would surely arise from any American co-operation with Darlan, but he was fortunately equally aware that at that point, with the Allies far from established in North Africa, Darlan was an absolutely essential military expedient. In the handling of this whole affair Murphy was at his very best.

Eisenhower flew in on the thirteenth, and made us proud to have such a compatriot. He had left his Grosvenor Square headquarters in London (always known as Eisenhower Platz) for Gibraltar some time before; now he could swing the North African campaign into top gear. Lunching with us in the dining room end of the Moorish-style living room in Cole's villa, he left us all struck by his incisive energy and the way in which he re-established our sense of proportion, which always warps easily in North Africa. He knew every tree in that political and military forest, but he also saw the wood with unwavering vision. I had thought Clark one of the most clear-headed, energetic men I had ever met, but Eisenhower dwarfed him. He was a living dynamo of energy, good humour, amazing memory for details and amazing courage for the future. All the tired North African air seemed stirred up and left full of mental ozone after this, his first visit to Algiers.

We learned later that the moment of the North African landings was the one that caused Eisenhower the most worry during his

European war experiences. I thought that possibly we had exaggerated our difficulties before the landings in Algiers; it was interesting to find the Supreme Commander had shared our qualms. He knew, more accurately than we did, just how tentatively Allied force was established in North Africa during those first days.

Our military effort, as everyone knows, went well at first. The French immediately produced an army of 110,000 men (under Giraud this increased to over 300,000) which guarded our lines of supply so well that there was never a single act of sabotage during the battle of North Africa. Seventy thousand of these men fought so bravely in the front lines—ill equipped as they were—that they lost 11,000 dead and 5,000 wounded. This army that had constantly been watched, inspected and demoralized by the German and Italian Armistice Commissions for two and a half years had not only managed to hide arms and supplies from the prying eye of the enemy, but had also concealed the exact number of its soldiers. Under the terms of the German Armistice the French were permitted to maintain only an army of 100,000 men in all North Africa. Many thousands more soldiers appeared the moment this army resumed its fight against the Germans.

I shall never forget the sight of Giraud's soldiers when American equipment arrived later for the French Army. As they looked at the mile-long rows of modern tanks, guns and jeeps drawn up for them, there were actual tears of joy in their eyes.

In the meantime, however, all sorts of slimy and unpleasant things were happening behind the scene in Algiers.

A particularly shocking episode occurred soon after the landing. Some scores of Germans and Italians were being loaded into trucks and taken off to a prison camp. A crowd immediately collected around them and began booing, hissing, throwing things and even spitting at them. It wasn't the hatred in their faces that shocked me; I shared that hatred. It was the fact that in the screaming crowd I saw many respectable North African citizens who, only a few weeks before, had been far from hostile to these same Germans and Italians at the Hotel Aletti. It seemed to me that the resisting French in the homeland, who had always frozen the Germans with contempt, had more right to hiss and spit at them later.

A much more shocking episode was the immediate creation of a kind of bastard Gestapo in the former Italian Institute, just off the main

street in Algiers, directed by one of our own underground men, André Achiary. Achiary had been *chef de la brigade de surveillance du Territoire*, a kind of political police force, until the German Armistice Commission realized that he was concentrating too much against them, and he was put in *résidence forcée*—a sort of semi-imprisonment. (We managed to get him out just a few days before the landing.) Unfortunately, he used his renewed power to proceed, illegally and even sadistically, against personal enemies as well as former collaborators. His third-degree methods were worthy of the Nazis, and it was doubly horrifying that they didn't seem to worry his former resistance colleagues in the least. In fact, he boasted openly of his actions to everyone. 'You ought to see what we've got going on down at the Italian Institute,' he said to me one day, smiling broadly. When he went into a few details my hair rose, I thought, almost visibly; but I controlled myself long enough to check with some other people and find out that not only was he not exaggerating, but the building was being protected by American soldiers. I told Rigault, who now occupied a position roughly like Minister of the Interior. When this 'Gestapo' was brought to the attention of the American authorities they cracked down at once, and the Achiary group took to underground plotting instead. We ran across their trail later.

I had a chance to see Morocco again soon after the landing. Mr Murphy and General Clark asked me to go there to find out what had happened to the letter President Roosevelt had sent to the Sultan of Morocco on D-Day explaining our intentions in Morocco and generally saluting the Sultan as the head of a friendly state. The President had never received an answer. Communications between Algiers and Morocco were chaotic at this time, and it was actually easier to send a messenger than to telephone or write. I left by plane with a copy of the original letter in my pocket.

When I got to Casablanca, I went to see General Patton, commander of our western forces, in his elaborate modern offices at the Shell Oil Company building. I showed him a copy of the letter, which was couched in simple terms, pointing out that we were landing to guard the sovereignty of Morocco and save it from the Axis, and that we hoped the Moroccans would receive us in a friendly spirit. (This was the letter I had given Vice-Consul Mayer before the landings, to be given to Noguès just before zero hour on D-Day. Noguès had refused to see Mayer, and, therefore, the document had been given to

a Residency official to be passed on to Noguès and by him to the Sultan. This Noguès had not done.)

I explained my errand and waited as Patton read the letter through, scowling, and said: 'I don't like it, do you?' I answered that I thought it was an excellent letter. 'There's not enough mention of the French in it,' Patton said. 'You see, General,' I explained, 'this letter originally was accompanied by a letter for General Noguès and the request that he hand this one on to the Sultan. There was no need to mention the French, for we were asking their own Resident General to deliver the letter.' Patton leaned back and said: 'Read it to me.' I read it aloud while he listened. When I had finished, he said again: 'No, I don't like it.' He took the letter and began to insert additions of his own.

Then, he asked me if I didn't think he had improved it. I muttered something about not feeling that any of us had the right to edit a President's letter without his knowledge. 'God damn it,' said Patton, banging the desk. 'I'll take full responsibility for this letter.' 'Very well, sir, I shall tell Mr Murphy when we telephone tonight,' I said. Patton looked up glowering. 'God damn it,' said Patton, 'I won't have you or any other goddam fool talking about this letter on the phone. Don't you know the wires are tapped?' 'Yes, sir, I do,' I replied. 'They've been tapped for the last year and a half.'

Our conversation grew more amicable, and I dared to ask some questions about the general situation in Morocco and the fate of General Béthouart and the other officers who had failed so miserably in their mission on D-Day, but had, nevertheless, risked their lives for us. Noguès had even tried to send them by plane for trial at Vichy. He was only prevented from doing this by the intervention of some ardent French patriots. General Patton said: 'General Noguès and I have a perfect understanding, and I have left all these problems of personnel up to him. Morocco is an extremely difficult country to manage. Now, the Jewish problem. . . .' Noguès had obviously used one of his favourite devices, the false issue, to distract General Patton from the fate of our brave friends.

Murphy telephoned me that night that there had been another cable from Washington about the Sultan's letter. He said I was to see Patton again the next day, and ask him to find out immediately if the original letter had ever been delivered. With my courage firmly in both hands, I did so. When I explained why I was there again, his rage

was magnificent. 'I told you I didn't want this discussed on the phone,' he bellowed, and with a few more 'Goddamnit's,' assured me he would take full responsibility in the matter of the letter. 'Then communicate with my superior, Ambassador Murphy,' I said, 'and tell him as much.' Patton suddenly and unexpectedly reversed field. 'You know, Pendar, my bark is worse than my bite,' he said, with a charming smile, and buzzed for an aide.

When he did solve the great letter mystery, it turned out, of course, that it had never been delivered. The 'mis-laid' letter was soon delivered by the Residency to the Sultan. By that time, I was on my way to Marrakesh for a twenty-four-hour visit in the company of General J. W. Anderson, Patton's infantry man, a cool, modest, friendly officer. It was amusing to see the new respect with which French generals suddenly treated me at Marrakesh, now that I was in the presence of our own military leaders.

During my short stay in Morocco I learned of the way in which General Noguès had covered the flight of the German Armistice Commission to Spanish Morocco. These were men I had sincerely hoped we would capture. Unfortunately, only a few of them were taken prisoner at Fedala near Casablanca. I also learned how furious the Germans had been during their flight when they saw the movements of vast numbers of Moroccan troops, with machine guns, and other arms, all of which had been successfully hidden from the Armistice Commission.

The whole Moroccan situation had an Alice-in-Wonderland quality after the landings. Noguès, having finally decided to co-operate with us, was being utterly charming to the American generals, and had won their hearts with dazzling displays of French military style and gold braid, Arab horsemanship, French cooking and general colonial razzle-dazzle. French and American officers began to mingle happily at marvellous parties given by Patton's political adviser, Vice-Consul Culbert, in his magnificently modern apartment in Casablanca. There was a great deal of gaiety, which seemed incongruous with men fighting in Tunisia, and yet was right and even necessary if the French and Americans were to get to know and trust each other. At the top strode Patton, rattling his great pistols and thoroughly enjoying his own rages. Later I was to learn that the Vichyites, to the population's amazement, were in favour at the moment, and that they had more or less discredited our true friends to the recently arrived American

soldiers. One Frenchman who had been most loyal and useful to us in the pre-landing days appeared very depressed and upset when I met him. 'I seem to have been on the wrong side before the landing,' he said. 'Everyone agrees that the former collaborationists are the only people your military men get on with or apparently like to see.' Certainly, political direction was lacking in Morocco from our point of view.

Back in Algiers I found more serious political storms brewing. They were so melodramatic, so fantastic, that even now they seem incredible.

At midnight, on the night of 7 November, Churchill had told de Gaulle that we were landing in North Africa at that moment. At this point, obviously, the British did not trust the Gaullist group enough to let him know our plans ahead of time. They were treating him as they did in the Madagascar affair, when they merely announced their action to him as a *fait accompli*. I do not know what de Gaulle said to Churchill, but I can guess because I do know what André Philip, an ardent and highly placed disciple of de Gaulle then in the United States said to Henri de Kerillis, at that time a Gaullist, who was trying to rejoice with him on the success of our landing. '*Ces salauds!*' said Philip. '*Ils ont fait ça sans nous. Ils vont le payer, et payer cher.*' ('The so-and-sos. They did that without us. They will pay for it—and dearly.')

Our own agreement with the French on the spot had been logical, and so necessary that everyone was completely taken aback by the storm that now reached Algiers from America and England. Mr Roosevelt, feeling the winds, issued his famous statement that our agreement with Darlan was a military necessity, and not, by implication, a permanent thing. (Darlan said bitterly: 'I see they are going to treat me like an orange, to be sucked and then thrown away.') In London, we were told later, Eden finally agreed to the arrangements only on condition that de Gaulle should have some representatives in North Africa at once. We had reassured the French in North Africa by having made the landings without any Gaullists, so this might be embarrassing. Many pro-Allied Frenchmen had been rightly afraid that the Army and the fleet would react violently, because of Mers-el-Kébir and Dakar, if de Gaulle took any part.

At this point de Gaulle was already broadcasting from London to France that he had had, and would have, nothing to do with all that

was going on around Darlan and Giraud in North Africa. This was extremely confusing to the French in Occupied France as we learned when French people escaping from France began to arrive in Algiers. It was one of de Gaulle's most overt attempts to discredit America's policy with France, and the Germans used it to make anti-Allied propaganda within France.

Already, obviously, our original American policy of keeping French politics out of the war was in danger. Our sound and simple idea of preserving France intact, so to speak, until elections could be held, of keeping any one group from using our military strength as a political advantage, was bogging down in a morass of American, British and French dissension. At this point, we would have done well to issue a public statement on our policy, and to make it plain that Darlan, Giraud, and de Gaulle, if he ever came to Africa, were to govern simply as a military, *pro-tem*. expedient (a sort of trusteeship), until the liberation of France.

As it was, we were still unaware of the basic importance of these political storms. We were so concentrated on the Tunisian campaign that there was hardly a ripple of excitement when de Gaulle's General d'Astier de la Vigerie, a brother of the one who had worked with us before the landings, arrived from London without warning or official permission. A man of bad reputation, in Morocco anyway, he established himself for some days, in December, at the Hotel Aletti, and began a series of curious meetings with various Algerian groups. He was in constant touch with the men who were arrested shortly after Darlan's assassination. Soon, some \$35,000 in American bills turned up in the hands of former members of our underground who were by now passionate Gaullists. But North Africa is always full of money passing secretly and rapidly from hand to hand, and this was only one more episode. René Capitant (later the French Minister of Education) who had produced a band of two hundred energetic young resisters for us at the time of the landing, emerged as a leading Gaullist. His followers now announced that they had thought all along that de Gaulle was to lead the landings, an inexplicable statement in view of the fact that everyone who met the night of the landings was openly discussing Giraud's arrival. This began the well-organized and expert publicizing of Gaullism in North Africa. Poor Giraud, politically innocent as a child, never fired an answering gun.

Behind, and simultaneous with, the Gaullist drive, still another

and more secret plot began to take form. It led directly to the assassination of Darlan.

This plot centred around the shopworn figure of the Comte de Paris, who was now whisked over secretly, by car, from Larache in Spanish Morocco, and installed in the villa of a prominent local royalist. Royalist feeling is still alive in France, and some authorities may have hoped that the French could ultimately resolve their differences around the Comte de Paris. (The reader will remember the earlier British flirtation with the 'Pretender'.) Many of our own pre-landing agents, like d'Astier and the Abbé Cordier, were devout royalists; Giraud, as a military man, was credited with royalist leanings and de Gaulle's own family had always been ardent members of the pre-war ghost courts in quasi-royal houses at Neuilly. In any case, the possibilities were good enough to produce an attempted *coup d'état*. After Darlan's assassination I saw copies of the telephone recordings, police reports, manifestoes and newspapers which had actually been printed ahead of time, and held in readiness: they announced that, upon Admiral Darlan's death, the Comte de Paris had assumed control of French destinies and the French Empire.

These papers are perhaps our best clue to the still officially unsolved mystery surrounding Darlan's death. The young assassin, caught pistol in hand, made an immediate sworn statement that he had shot Darlan on 24 December, of his own volition, without help or backing from anyone, and that he took full responsibility for the act. But the fact is that the fanatical and perhaps half-crazed assassin, Bonnier de la Chapelle, was, apparently, a victim of sinister dishonesty. This I learned from Rigault, then in charge of police work in Algiers. He had received a call from the two guards stationed outside de la Chapelle's cell. They had reason to feel that the youth had been made the dupe in some underhanded intrigue.

These guards, Lieutenant Schilling and Captain Gaulard, reported that a police officer had come to the boy's cell during the night and promised him his life if he would reveal his accomplices; that de la Chapelle hesitated, broke down and told the whole story, which this police officer (who still shall be nameless for obvious reasons) pocketed. Since this document was never produced, the officer obviously intended to use it for blackmailing purposes of his own. Only the first confession was used at de la Chapelle's trial. The rest of the guards' story was a horrible one of the boy's last night, as he clung to the bars,



wept, and frantically asked the guards where the messenger was who would have to come soon to bring him the pardon he had been twice promised. He told the guards that he had made his original confession only because his backers had promised that they could save him from justice. But neither the first promise nor the signed full confession saved him. He was taken out the next day and shot at dawn, a fanatical and pathetic tool of others.

From the things the guards heard, plus the usual tapped wires, plus the signed statement of another young man, Rigault pieced together a story which probably has at least a rough accuracy. De la Chapelle was a member of the *Chantier de la Jeunesse*. A group of them in a camp near Algiers had decided, under guidance well hidden by political screens, that Darlan must go, to 'purify' France. Like the Suicides' Club, they drew straws for the gory honour of serving as executioner. The first young man refused. De la Chapelle accepted. He was driven to Darlan's office that day in a Citroën widely recognized as belonging to his organization, and waited in the crowded hallway, tense and drawn, to fire the shot.

In the light of this knowledge, the action of General Bergeret (who temporarily took over after the murder of Darlan) in throwing so many of our own former underground into jail after the assassination, is a little more understandable. (This action was popularly and falsely credited to Rigault, as Minister of Interior.) At the time most observers in Algiers thought it an unforgivable act of treachery; yet it was obviously impossible to release the whole story. Rigault's best friend was d'Astier. Rigault went to him at once, and d'Astier swore he had nothing to do with the plot. Justice, which the French as well as we ourselves demanded, took its course. Dr Aboulker and his son, José, Alexandre, Achiary, and others with pro-Allied reputations were put under *résidence forcée* in southern Algeria while the investigations proceeded, but were released shortly. D'Astier and Cordier were put in prison in Algiers where they stayed for months, and were only released when de Gaulle took over. To Americans on the scene but not on the inside, it all looked political. It was political, but not in quite the way they thought.

I would have found the inside story incredible myself, if I had not sat in the Restaurant de Paris only a few weeks before, and heard some of our leading pre-landing collaborators blandly discussing past acts of violence of incredible and gruesome ferocity. It is hard, but important,

for Americans to realize that the spirit of violence that lies deep in human beings, the spirit that broke out in our own Ku Klux Klan, has been released on a really enormous scale in modern Europe. That release was, perhaps, the worst of Hitler's crimes. We saw it face to face in Algiers.

After Darlan's assassination, Giraud took over the political as well as military power in North Africa. Our old friend, Rigault, became his Minister of Interior, our other old friend, the industrialist, Lemaigre-Dubreuil, served as his political adviser. They were hardly outstanding French leaders, or in any way representative ones, though they both gave Giraud good advice which he was too politically inept to use; and Rigault, at least, remained utterly loyal to America to the end. We had used these men, at first, because we had to. They were available, and no one else was. Later we went on using them because we were committed to them. It was then that we made our first major mistake. If Murphy was too deeply committed to them morally, he should have been replaced, for his own sake, with a man of higher rank and no involvements. As it was, we followed a policy of inertia rather than our original policy of 'hands-off-French-politics'. There are times when taking no action is more drastic than action itself. This was one of them.

We let Giraud go his way, with Rigault and Lemaigre-Dubreuil trying vainly to steer him. And his way was one that inevitably threw North Africa into the hands of the politically-minded Gaullists. Honest and inept, Giraud quite sincerely thought that he could keep the home front in a state of suspense while he fought the war in Tunisia. He was far too slow in restoring Vichy-crushed civil liberties, in bringing back the Crémieux Law giving Jews civil rights, and in getting rid of the whole shopworn Vichy gang in North Africa. It was not that he believed in Vichy's ideas; it was simply that he thought everyone and everything could wait until the war was won and France was free to speak her own mind. While his armies were covering themselves with glory he drifted politically; and he drifted straight into disaster. And with every military and political card in the pack firmly in our hands, we drifted with him.

## A Footnote to History

History laid a finger, briefly, on the lovely villa of La Saadia where I lived in Marrakesh. While I was back in Morocco from Algeria, during the Casablanca Conference, Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt, together with many British and American military leaders, stayed at La Saadia. I was fortunate enough to act as host, and to get an unforgettable glimpse of great men at work.

The decisions taken at Casablanca have been canvassed by many political writers. I won't attempt to add my own opinion to theirs. I did, however, have an amazing piece of luck in seeing a part of the Conference from an informal, almost intimate, point of view. It was absorbing to see what an international gathering looks like from the inside, when the top hats are off and the photographers have gone home, and statesmen sit around the dinner table together. It was absorbing, too, to observe the enormous amount of detailed planning, the hundreds of people it takes to bring together the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Great Britain, house them, guard them, and feed them. My domestic view, so to speak, of the Conference may be an interesting sub-footnote to the history of those crucial days.

Before the Conference I had found myself back in the perpetually intriguing, gossiping Moroccan world. I had chosen to go back to Morocco on the understanding that General Noguès was on his way out, and that I could work in the newly opened Rabat Consulate in a more friendly political atmosphere than our pre-landing one. Unfortunately, by the time I reached Morocco, our civilian and military policies were already running foul of each other as they were later to do on the mainland of Europe. While our diplomats tried to get Noguès replaced with a more co-operative, less Vichyite, character, General Patton, as I noted before, succumbed completely to the military dramatics Noguès could always produce. So did many of his top officers. I remember early discussions with some of these men

which proved that they saw the Vichyite group in Morocco in its true colours. These same men, after a dinner at the Residency, where they were received with a fanfare of Moroccan trumpeters and given a welcoming escort of Spahi guards, would come away dazed and dazzled, with an entirely different point of view about Noguès and his subordinate officials. Part of this, perhaps, was due to the *esprit de corps* that seems to exist between all professional armies, friendly or enemy, and that later caused trouble in Germany. Part of it however was, I think, simply the curious love of pomp, ceremony and imperial glitter that beguiles so many Americans abroad.

The result was that an unhealthy state of non-co-operation continued to exist among the French bureaucracy in Morocco even after the landings. The years under Vichy had allowed a sort of political poison to permeate all those colonial officers. They were used to a hidden, adroit resistance to Germany, but had a difficult time making the transition to open warfare. It was, unquestionably, a delicate psychological problem, this business of weaning Vichyites from their timid habits, but we pulled the operation out too long. We never got the co-operation from them that I feel sure could have been achieved by a more positive and even aggressive policy.

We also suffered from our perennial American inability to get different departments to work together abroad. The State Department's representatives in North Africa as a matter of fact made every attempt to co-operate with the Army and to give them the benefit of a fairly extensive experience on the spot. In Algiers, under General Eisenhower's marvellously understanding and capable direction, the two services worked together smoothly. In Morocco, the Army showed an inclination to run the show single-handed.

When I went back to Marrakesh, intending to close the villa and move to Rabat, I found a great deal going on in the sleepy Arab town. Marrakesh had become the most important airport in North Africa. Its climatic conditions were so perfect that 'Forts' and C-47s flew there direct from America. It was swarming with Americans, and there were endless difficulties of language and understanding that called for help from an old consular hand, as I now felt myself to be. We had some pleasant, frivolous interludes in the midst of the serious business of war work and the higher drama of the Casablanca Conference. La Saadia became a sort of inter-Allied club to which the aviators brought new swing records and American magazines which were, incredibly,

only a few days old. We even gave two dances, at Christmas and the New Year, which included every French official's daughter for miles around. After years away from home it was heart-warming to see the pleasant, human, American quality of our men in uniform, and the unfailing politeness with which they thanked me and sent thanks to the owner of La Saadia each time they came there.

As a final sidelight on the strange and wonderful Arab mind I learned to love in Morocco, I might mention the party-to-end-all-parties given for Josephine Baker, the Negro entertainer who was such a toast in Paris for years. The party was given by Si Mohamed Menebhi and Moulay Larbi el Alaoui, a cousin of the Sultan; Josephine Baker was living in one of Si Mohamed's houses in Marrakesh. Practically every American in North Africa, including most of the generals, received printed, gilt-edged invitations to dine 'to meet Miss Baker'. Late in the afternoon of the party day I returned from Casablanca to find the two hosts waiting for me at the villa. They were in despair. They had no idea how many people were coming or what they should do with them when they came. I asked them for their list, but they couldn't even remember whom they had asked. I sat down to try to think of everyone in town I knew who *might* be coming and then asked them to try to remember who had told them they *might* come. With this skeleton list, I went around to the Menebhi palace, and started arranging the tables.

Within a few hours at least a hundred guests began arriving. I stayed at the door, trying desperately to write down the names on place cards as the guests thronged in. Then, magically, numerous tables were pulled out of back hallways, and amidst a magnificent oriental confusion, jazzed up a bit for the occasion by Josephine Baker, with calla lilies and jungle-like decorations, Berber and Arab dancers, singers, American Negro Red Cross workers, white officers, civilians, women war correspondents, and Moors ranging from pure white through to chocolate brown—all had a magnificent time. It would have done some American politicians a great deal of good to see how free, how gay, natural and simple an atmosphere was created amidst this fusion of races. From the roof-tops, as always, the white-clad, veiled Arab women looked down into the courtyard to watch the party. It was certainly the binding cement of Islam that made this racial fusion not only possible but delightful. And the fusion of races was nothing to the fusion of oriental music and jazz, and the babel of

languages—everyone, from Vincent Sheean, Archie Roosevelt, and Inez Robb to obscure Arab palace politicians conversing in a jumble of English, French and faltering Arabic.

It was a far cry from this unreal, moonlit scene to the great political world which suddenly reached out to touch the little oasis city of Marrakesh.

On 2 January 1943 I was ordered to Casablanca to see General Hyde of the Air Transport Command, who was flying in from near Dakar. I arrived at Casa only to be met by General Alfred Grunther, General Clark's brilliant and delightful Chief of Staff, and an English friend of mine, Colonel William Sterling, who told me to go right back to Marrakesh with them. I explained I had been called to Casa by General Hyde, but they told me their request took priority. We flew back together, and lunched at the villa. Before and after lunch, the two officers inspected the villa, keeping up a cryptic conversation in which Grunther kept mentioning, 'Our No. 1 man' and, turning to Sterling, 'Your No. 1 man.' I was thoroughly mystified, but had learned after my years in Africa to take mystery for granted. 'How many people can be put up in the villa?' they asked finally, and seemed disappointed that there were only six master bedrooms and six baths. I mentioned the fact that there were a good many servants' rooms, as the lady who owned the villa was a woman of great elegance who had always travelled before the war in her own yacht and brought a large staff of her own servants with her. They inspected each room with exclamations of delight, and with a care that left me more mystified than ever. Finally, they took me back into the drawing-room, and broke the great news.

'We are about to let you in on a secret which only a handful of people in the whole world know,' they said. 'In about ten days' time there is to be a meeting of the American and British Heads of State, and it is not yet decided whether it will be in Casablanca or here in this villa. You see,' they added, 'while we prefer Casa for the Conference, it is within bombing range of German planes based in the south of France. In case of raids, we have to be ready to move the entire Conference here; otherwise, it will take place at Anfa-Superior.' Anfa was a little settlement of snowy-white-glistening villas huddled around a rather streamlined, modern hotel, where the German Armistice Commission had operated until only a few weeks before. From its green, grass-covered heights, Anfa overlooked the sea

on one side and the city of Casa on the other. It was an easy target for bombers.

'Even if there isn't a raid,' said Colonel Sterling, 'we may have the Conference here if the Prime Minister decides he prefers it to Casa. The Prime Minister would like this place; he has always been fond of Marrakesh anyway. In any case, even if the main part of the Conference is held at Anfa, A-1 and B-1 will come down here at the end to be together and away from all the others.' (A-1 was the code name for Mr Roosevelt, and B-1 for Mr Churchill.)

After fine-tooth-combing La Saadia, I took the two men around the town to show them other possible villas and the Hotel Mamounia, for billeting purposes. Then the General and Colonel left, warning me to be ready to commandeer the entire hotel at a few hours' notice, and to find quarters for any French people remaining at the Mamounia. American officers there would be moved to the airport. The Army would supply transport. I was to be ready to have a barbed-wire fence put around the entire hotel and vicinity by Army personnel on short notice. All my plans had to be made in the greatest secrecy.

A few days later some security men appeared, eagle-eyed and serious, under Mr Reilly of the White House security staff. This time the villa was looked over in minute detail, not only by him but by electricians searching for traces of dictaphones and the like. Everyone approved of La Saadia because the entire place of three or four acres was surrounded by a high, rose-coloured wall, and there was only one entrance. The security experts decided to set up their precautions entirely on the inside so that nothing would be visible from the outside to excite local curiosity. I had to make a plan of the entire property, with the location of all neighbouring houses. Then I had to find out the name of each person, including the Arab servants, who lived in these houses. After this was done, an investigation had to be made of each of these people. It all seemed far-fetched until I reminded myself that the two arch-enemies of the Axis were moving into a country and a city where for two and a half years there had been an enemy Armistice Commission at work on both the French and native population. Then security seemed of capital importance.

Mr Reilly decided to put the President in an inside bedroom with only one window looking out onto a courtyard. The Prime Minister was given the one next to it after less thought because the British make much less fuss about security than we do.

Then began incredibly complicated preparations. Guards had to be arranged for, and housed in the garage. American mechanics went to work on the villa's cars, which had not run since 1939, and on an enormous bus the villa's owner had used to transport luggage, guests, and servants from her yacht. Anti-aircraft guns went into place outside the house. Extra transformers were arranged to give additional power for electric lights. (Part of the lighting system went bad during General Marshall's and Admiral King's visit, leaving those two distinguished visitors to bathe, shave, and dress by candlelight.) Endless telephones went in next with bright red 'scramblers' to safeguard telephone conversations, a switchboard in a little porter's room at the right of the entrance, and our own exchange on the Army system, 'Atlas'. There were telephones in every bedroom, on the terrace, in the *salon*, at the door, at the entrance gate, at different places in the garden, so that the secret-service men could check the guards. I understood the telephone shortage in the United States as I counted them.

The first visitors were to be the military command. I was told my own staff could run the house when General Marshall, Admiral King and their parties came to visit. When the President came, it was necessary for soldiers to take over everything, and my staff had to leave the premises. Luckily a very efficient housekeeper and overseer employed by the owner went with the place. My chauffeur was a husky looking Moroccan Jew who liked to talk tough, hated to work, and was quite unmanageable except by me. He held me in awe. (I was much more frightened of him.) The chef, Ali, was an Arab character with a flowing moustache, who seemed to spend most of his time outside the kitchen door with the two kitchen boys, the Moroccan serving women who did the laundry and cleaning and my nervous but efficient Arab house-boy who was always resplendent in white with a scarlet fez. This Arab was known as 'Kouskous', and was the son of one of the head servants who worked in the house. I also had a French house-boy named Georges, a most excitable character who, like the rest of the staff, kept going only because of the fabulous Louis, my *maître d'hôtel*. This numerous staff sounds opulent in America, but North Africa is overpopulated and since the natives don't care much for work they are paid very low wages by American standards.

Louis was in his element during all the excitement. He loved anything to do with the Army and was the greatest military snob I have



ever known. He was polite to everyone, but almost burst with pride if he could wait on a four-star general or an admiral. Mr Roosevelt and Mr Churchill were demi-gods to him, and he walked on the clouds all the time they were there.

Finally, amid intense excitement in the kitchen courtyard, General Marshall arrived with a party which included Field-Marshal Sir John Dill and Brigadier Dykes, who was killed in an aeroplane crash at Gibraltar on his way home from the Conference. Dykes was a delightful man who loved America deeply and sincerely. He was in high good humour during his visit, and later told a mutual friend that he felt as if he were in the *Arabian Nights*. 'I wanted to wear a turban and those big oriental trousers there,' he said. 'I felt like an *Esquire* cartoon.'

I was struck at once with the thoughtfulness and simplicity of General Marshall. Seldom have I met anyone who so completely fitted that hackneyed phrase 'the perfect gentleman'. The first thing he said to me, before I even showed him to his room, was: 'Would you be so kind as to show me the room you have assigned to Field-Marshal Dill? You know he is my guest, and I want to make sure that he is comfortable.'

We had tea on the terrace in the sun where Louis, beaming, had prepared a magnificent display of fruit juices, tea, whisky and soda, sandwiches and cakes. More men in uniform arrived and were beginning to help themselves under Louis's guidance when I noticed an older man, sitting entirely by himself, with no one near him and nothing to eat or drink. He was obviously a high-ranking admiral, and although I had never seen a picture of Admiral King, I suspected it must be he. I went over to play the host and found him definitely and gruffly uninterested in eating or drinking. Finally, I drew up a chair, thinking the least I could do was to engage him in polite conversation. He was in no mood for that either, and didn't even want to see his room. I didn't give up, however, thinking it would be impolite. Finally, he must have felt it was a losing battle, for he took some tea, and then began to talk delightfully. I saw that we were being eyed with some amazement by the others, but I knew nothing then of his hair-raising reputation for temper. I suppose they were waiting for me to be consumed in the King fires.

Everyone was fascinated by the house and the garden. They all climbed the tower. Then General Arnold and General Somervell and

the lesser fry, like any tourists, wanted to go and buy souvenirs and sight-see in Marrakesh. I went along myself to act as guide, partly because I had been told that wild rumours were already flying around the town. I told the generals of my misgivings about 'security', and General Arnold told me to handle things myself, and that they would follow me. Field-Marshal Dill and General Marshall stayed at the villa, and talked together on the tower, while Admiral King rested before dinner.

I had the cars stop some distance from the Place Djemaa El Fna, and we proceeded on foot, but just what I feared began to happen. The Arabs, who knew nothing of American insignia of rank, guessed at once that the men with me were not just ordinary officers but something special. The more we circulated around the Place, the more the excitement grew. The generals wanted to explore the *souks* where they hoped to buy souvenirs, but, knowing what the Arabs were saying, I led them to the top of a hotel from which they could get a safe, bird's-eye view of the whole market. I then took them by a back route to the cars, and although nothing whatever happened, I was greatly relieved when I got them safely back to the villa. General Arnold was especially full of enthusiasm and curiosity for everything he saw, and would have been a most delightful person to take on long sight-seeing expeditions. The next day, the German radio announced that the entire American High Command were at that very moment staying at the villa of Mr Pendar, the American vice-consul at Marrakesh. The Arab-Axis underground was as efficient as our own had been before the landings.

I shall always remember dinner that night. The whole atmosphere was set by the dignity, sincerity and good humour of Field-Marshal Dill, a great friend of the United States, whose death was a real blow to Anglo-American relations. Everyone, in fact, was in a good mood. Admiral King and General Marshall were in splendid humour. Everyone seemed delighted with the success of the North African landing. I was amused to note that after dinner the great men went off to bed early, while the lesser fry sat around in the drawing-room telling yarns. I shall never forget the sort of glow of pride that came over me that night as I saw English and American characters again. Their intelligence, energy and good humour were like a shot in the arm for an American too long exposed to foreign personalities and I felt a million times repaid for the long, black pre-landing period. I was especially drawn to Admiral King, because he was so grudgingly

good-humoured and so wonderfully tough. I could picture him barking out orders from his flagship, and having the oceans themselves change position.

The next morning, the party was called while it was still dark to be ready to leave the Marrakesh airfield at 8.00 a.m. As we collected in front of the villa, I offered a lift to the airport in my tiny yellow Renault to anyone who wanted it. In the half light, I heard someone say: 'Would you have room for me?' I said, 'Certainly, come along,' and then looked around and saw it was General Marshall himself. It was arranged for trucks to go ahead with anti-aircraft guns, and others to follow the procession of cars from the villa to the airport. General Marshall and I started ahead of the heavily armed *cortège*, as there had been no provision for my car to be part of it. All along the road, about a mile and a half long, were countless Arabs on mule-back and on foot. They seemed more curious than ever as we went by. On the way General Marshall told me that he never would forget one week-end when he had planned to go on to Virginia for a day's shooting on his first holiday since the war began. Everything was set, and his wife, who wanted him to take a rest, was particularly anxious he should go. He came home only to tell her that the trip had to be called off, because he couldn't get away. His wife told him that he always thought everything was so important that he would never take a rest. 'Actually,' he said, 'this was the time Mr Murphy came to Washington, and all the final plans were made, the date and hour definitely set, and the whole strategy minutely planned, for the North African landing.'

After the military left, I was told to stand by for a possible stopover by the Prime Minister or the President. To our intense disappointment, the weather at Casablanca was clear, and both of their planes flew straight through. At Casablanca, the top men used a new, large airfield at a small village, about nine or ten miles back from the coast. They were driven to town in closed cars that had the windows deliberately spattered with mud so no one could see who was inside. This technique became routine during the Casablanca Conference. Around the airport, you often saw soldiers working up mud, like nursery children, and slinging it with infinite satisfaction at a clean, polished sedan or limousine.

My next orders were to be ready to receive Mr Roosevelt and Mr Churchill, and to arrange the taking over of the Hotel Mamounia at a few hours' notice. By now, the rumours flying around Morocco were

frenzied. I was told on the best authority that the King of England and Pétain were in Marrakesh, that Stalin had been seen walking in my garden, and that Mussolini was observed admiring the view from the tower of the villa. Even the Pope had been seen.

All this while Louis was happily training the G.I.s who had been put on the villa detail in European etiquette. I shall never forget one day when I kept hearing the strangest noises in the dining room. I looked in. There was Louis in charge of what looked to me like scores of soldiers. Fourteen chairs were drawn up to the table with a bemused Yank in each one of them. Before the carefully set table stood Louis, himself immaculate in his short white coat, with another detail of half a dozen G.I.s. Each of the standing soldiers had a huge platter, and Louis instructed them as they proceeded solemnly and hesitatingly around the table, to serve the ranking guests first. I nearly broke his heart by telling him to stop weaving in and out and just pass the food to each person in turn. Louis felt I was letting the whole tone of the house down.

Occasionally, some of the people at the Conference would take a few hours off to fly down to lunch and sight-see in Marrakesh. Field-Marshal Sir Harold Alexander turned up, and one day we had the pleasure of entertaining Lord Louis Mountbatten and some members of his staff. Mountbatten had a buoyancy and gaiety that I have rarely seen. He had the sort of easy assurance that less gifted people often interpret as a lack of seriousness. One of the finest men I have ever met, Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur (now Lord) Tedder, also visited, and, like Mr Churchill, made sketches of the views from La Saadia.

I used to go to Anfa for the day quite often, especially when Robert Murphy was there, to discuss the French situation. One day photographers were called in to take the famous picture of Generals de Gaulle and Giraud standing in front of the President and Mr Churchill, awkwardly shaking hands. People from London to San Francisco sighed with relief and said: 'At last, the French are united and we can get on with the war.' Unfortunately, this was not the case. American and British diplomats at Casablanca knew the difficulties that had to be overcome even to get the picture taken. In the picture itself the handshake of these two French leaders gave not the slightest illusion of friendship.

In the photograph were all the elements of the ensuing drama—Mr Churchill with his creation, General de Gaulle; and President

Roosevelt with the man we were backing to lead the French armies, General Giraud. Both Mr Roosevelt and Mr Churchill were concentrated on the potentiality of France's military effort. They fully realized that, before anything could be done, some unity had to be established between the two existing French factions. With this aim in view, the President had asked General Giraud to come on from Algiers to discuss the future military role of the French. Mr Churchill had sent a similar invitation to General de Gaulle in London. General Giraud responded at once and arrived at Casablanca. General de Gaulle, however, did not even reply to his invitation. He had to be reminded by the British that his Free French movement depended financially on the goodwill of the British Government and the Prime Minister. Even then, two or three telegrams, each less polite than the last, had to be dispatched to de Gaulle before he finally arrived in Casablanca. It was at this meeting that General Giraud formally asked General de Gaulle to join him at once in the Tunisian war against the Germans. This de Gaulle refused to do.

After the President's and the Prime Minister's painful attempt to bring de Gaulle and Giraud, if not together, at least into their first official contact with each other, Murphy had a long interview with de Gaulle. He officially invited de Gaulle, at this time, to take charge of North Africa. It is most important to remember, in judging our French policy, that de Gaulle not only declined this invitation but told Murphy, in so many words, that he, de Gaulle, did not have enough influence to do this. He estimated at this time, he said, that only 10 per cent. of the North African French would support him. Later, many sincere Gaullists claimed that North Africa was pro de Gaulle and that 'reactionaries' in the State Department were keeping him from assuming his rightful place there. The fact of the matter, as de Gaulle himself realized, was quite different.

A small but significant clue to de Gaulle's intense nationalism also appeared during the Conference. When Mr Murphy went to see de Gaulle in the villa which had been requisitioned for his use, he learned that de Gaulle had only agreed to enter the villa after he learned that it was not owned by a Frenchman but by a foreigner. Otherwise, he felt, the use of the villa for Conference purposes was an infringement on French sovereignty. This was the first indication we had of the attitude de Gaulle later took towards the Clark-Darlan Agreements. One of his basic objections to them was that they gave

the American forces the right of requisition to help fight the North African campaign. (Actually, we never used this right except at Anfa. All other requisitioning was done by the French for us, and, on the whole, done well.)

The Casablanca-Anfa Conference was the first time, incidentally, that American diplomats on the spot realized the full force of the storm that had blown up at home over the North African political situation. Averell Harriman, who was Lend-Lease Administrator in London at this time, came to see Murphy and told him frankly of the violent criticisms in the English press. At the same time, American newspaper clippings and magazine articles began to arrive in droves, almost all acid, suspicious, and anti-Murphy. This came as a distinct shock to Murphy and to all of us. We realized for the first time what a magnificent propaganda job was being done by the Gaullist forces, for their party line was evident in many articles, and how completely it had already affected British and American opinion. Looking back on it, I believe this propaganda was, next to our own hesitancy in using a vigorous hand, the biggest single factor in our diplomatic defeat. It put enormous difficulties in the way of our holding to our original French policy of keeping politics in abeyance until after the war. Both Mr Roosevelt and Mr Churchill eventually had to respond to this home front pressure.

In spite of this growing body of Gaullist opinion at home, the Prime Minister was at this time supposed to be completely in sympathy with American policy. In fact, our policy had been greatly influenced by his expressed opinion of de Gaulle, and he himself was believed to have gradually admitted the definite advantages to be gained by the American relations with Vichy. Casablanca was the culmination of the American-French policy as guided and shaped by President Roosevelt.\*

There is no question about the fact that, at Casablanca, the President was deeply preoccupied with the future of France. I heard this repeatedly from people who talked to him, and saw it myself in our brief contact. He was convinced of the importance of a revived, rejuvenated France in Europe. He was worried, like the French themselves, by the way in which French manpower was rotting in German prison camps and factories, the way in which the French birth-rate was falling while the death-rate was increasing. It was with this in mind

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\* See Epilogue p. 228

that Mr Roosevelt and Mr Churchill drew up the Anfa agreements for re-arming the French Army. This remained the keystone of our French policy until de Gaulle, and his backers in the British Foreign Office, threw us off centre. This re-armament, this attempt to bring France back into the Great Power class, was important not only for the sake of France herself, but for Allied military reasons.

Under the President's plan, the new French Army was to be made up of Frenchmen in North Africa and all over the world, and also from the great masses of native Moroccans, Algerians and Senegalese on whom France has traditionally relied for superb troops. It was to number at least 500,000 men, with the possibility of growing to a million, all armed and equipped by us. Though it would have taken time to train this Army to use our latest weapons, our leaders at Anfa felt that it could be done in time to have Frenchmen play a real part in the liberation of France, and in time to release many American troops for the Japanese war.

All these hopes were destroyed by de Gaulle's unwillingness to co-operate. Though he finally signed an innocuous document establishing the principle of agreement with Giraud, in practice, as will be seen later, he refused to take any part in an over-all, non-partisan attempt to create a really national French Army.

The psychological reasons for this have often been discussed. De Gaulle's temperament is public knowledge today. His interview with the President at Anfa, at which he first demonstrated his curious egoism to Mr Roosevelt, has been described, but I think not completely accurately. I was told by high authority at the time that it went something like this:

President Roosevelt told de Gaulle that France was in such dire military straits that she needed a general of Napoleonic calibre. '*Mais je suis cet homme,*' said de Gaulle. She was, went on the President, in such a bad financial state that she also needed a Colbert. '*Mais,*' said de Gaulle simply, '*je suis cet homme.*' Finally, said the President, controlling his amazement, she was so devitalized politically that she needed a Clemenceau. De Gaulle drew himself up with dignity and said, '*Mais je suis cet homme.*' It was this interview that made the President realize the full extent of the psychological problem de Gaulle presented.

Before the President and the Prime Minister came to Marrakesh, the President went to Rabat to review American troops. This was the

first time that Moroccans could confirm the rumour that the President was there. One Frenchman never forgot the episode. The troops were living in tents outside Rabat in the Aguedal forest of pine trees, on high ground overlooking Rabat to the sea. Every day the local baker came out from Rabat with the bread he had baked for the Army. He was there this particular day, chatting casually with the soldiers when the order to come to attention was given. No one could leave the encampment ground. The baker, forced to stay, was on the side of the road when the jeep bearing Mr Roosevelt drove up. During the ceremonies the President noticed this civilian and asked who he was. On being told it was the local baker, he characteristically spoke to him in French and shook him by the hand. When the baker returned to Rabat, he told everybody he had shaken hands with President Roosevelt. Everyone thought he had quite literally gone mad, but a few days later, when the pictures of the review appeared in the local papers, he became a sort of hero, and his shop was crowded all day long by French and Arabs anxious to touch the hand that had touched Mr Roosevelt's.

The President also arranged a dinner at his villa at Anfa, where the Sultan and his eldest son (now King Hassan II) were the guests of honour. I was not at this dinner, but the President told me about it afterwards. It had made a great impression on him. The French Resident General was present, as he always was in any contact the Sultan had with foreigners, to insulate the Moors from any foreign influence. Yet, during this dinner, the President and the Sultan had a long talk together out of earshot of the Resident General, an episode extremely irritating to local French officialdom. It was, I believe, the first time in the history of Morocco that the Sultan had met the head of any other foreign state than France. While the French fumed, however, the Sultan and the very politically-minded Moors were overjoyed. They didn't, to my surprise, jump to the conclusion that we were going to take over the Protectorate, but they did see themselves being treated, at last, as a sovereign state. They considered this a proof of our sincerity in the Atlantic Charter. It was amusing later to find that almost every Arab in Morocco thought he knew the whole story of this dinner and everything that was said, just as if he had been there. I'm sure every detail of King Farouk's, Haile Selassie's and Ibn Saud's visits to the President at Cairo were known to their subjects in the same way.



When I was finally told that the President and Prime Minister were coming down to stay at La Saadia on Sunday 24 January, I had another call from the White House security people, arranging every minute detail of the visit. More ramps for Mr Roosevelt's wheel-chair had to be made, and the ones already made put in place so that he could be wheeled anywhere in the house and garden and at the same time walk (with railings) in case he wanted to. They had to be placed carefully and inconspicuously so they wouldn't be constant reminders to him and to everyone else of his infirmity.

Then came the big day. All the staff including Louis were told to leave the house, but Louis later got a special dispensation when the Lieutenant put in charge of the household detail had a nervous breakdown over his responsibilities, and had to be locked up in his room with the liquor he too obviously enjoyed.

Just before lunch on Sunday, a plane-load of luggage, some security men, and the Prime Minister's and President's personal servants arrived. Prettyman, the President's coloured valet, slept on a couch in the library, so as to be in a room connecting with the President's. Sawyers, the Prime Minister's servant, was a character. When I showed him his master's room, which was a show-piece in Morocco, I said: 'Well, Sawyers, I hope your master will be comfortable here.' Sawyers looked sadly around the room, and said in a dull, flat voice: 'Oh, it isn't too bad, I think it will do.' Much amused, I turned to leave, saying: 'Why, damn it, Sawyers, you are now in the finest bedroom in all of North Africa, if not on the whole bloody continent.' With this, Sawyers came running after me, and said: 'It is lovely, sir. Thank you, sir. Very good, sir.' I went in to see how Prettyman was making out, and I found him smiling from ear to ear as he installed the President's things, his dark, friendly face looking incongruous in that exotic oriental atmosphere of ornate carvings and sunken marble bath tubs.

I had been told that the President's and the Prime Minister's parties would leave Anfa by motor just before lunch, and that they were taking a picnic lunch with them to eat on the way. I sat with some of the officers of the guard in the big *salon* to wait. Every half hour we would get a bulletin by telephone. 'They are now passing through Settat, going at about thirty-five miles an hour,' then again, 'They have stopped to lunch by the roadside.' It was like listening to a radio description of the Grand National. Suddenly came the final call:

'The party is now turning towards the villa and should arrive in ten minutes.'

In a few minutes, a huge Daimler limousine, painted olive drab, rolled up. In the back seat, serenely chatting, were the President and the Prime Minister. Plain-clothes men jumped from the front of the car and the one behind it and ran straight for me. 'Who are you?' they asked. I explained that I lived in this house and had been instructed to act as host.

With this, Mr Churchill alighted, came up and shook me warmly by the hand. On the other side of the car I saw men busying themselves with a wheel-chair, and assisting Mr Roosevelt out of the car. He was, as prearranged, to be wheeled around through the garden to the terrace and from there could more easily enter the house without having to go up the six or seven steps to the front door. I entered the house with the Prime Minister and showed him to his room, and then went out through the drawing-room to the terrace to meet the President and show him to his room, in turn. Both men were in overcoats because, out of the sun, the Moroccan air had a cool edge to it.

Shortly, everyone came out onto the terrace again where Louis had set up a tea service that looked like an Oriental potentate's. As Mr Churchill came into the *salon*, he said: 'Well, Pendar, I must say your soldiers get the beauty prize. In my whole life I have never seen such a magnificent lot of men as those American soldiers who lined the road on our way down here.' (Guards had been posted the entire one hundred and fifty miles from Casa to Marrakesh.) We all sat on the terrace in the warming sun, overlooking the emerald-green pool and the garden. Opposite the terrace, above the garden wall, hung a large piece of green canvas between two cedar trees, to blot out a window in a nearby house from which the terrace of La Saadia could be seen.

Both Mr Roosevelt and Mr Churchill seemed to be in high spirits, and spoke with admiration of the superb view of the Atlas Mountains they had seen for the last fifty miles or so of their journey. This was the President's first trip to Morocco, but the Prime Minister had been in Marrakesh before, and had even gone up into the Atlas to the *casbah* of the Glaoui at Telouet. As we drank our tea, Robert Hopkins, Harry Hopkins's son, made films of the occasion.

Soon, as invariably happened at La Saadia, people began to speak

of the beauties of the house and garden. I saw Mr Churchill gazing up at the house and tower and, finally, he came up to me and asked if I would be kind enough to show him the tower. As we climbed up, I saw his shrewd eyes taking in everything. From the open terrace he told me how much he loved Marrakesh and how much he had enjoyed sketching here before the war, during his last visit. Finally, he said, 'Don't you believe, Pendar, that it can be arranged for the President to be brought up here? I am so fond of this superb view that it has been my dream to see it with him. All during the Conference I have looked forward to coming down here to this beautiful spot.'

We went down to ask the President and, on the way, Mr Churchill carefully counted the steps. On the terrace again, he turned to Mr Roosevelt and said, 'Mr President, both Mr Pendar and I are most anxious for you to see the view from the tower. It is unique. Do you think you could be persuaded to make the trip?' We had already spoken with the President's attendants, who would have to do the carrying as the staircase was too narrow for a chair. The President replied, 'I have every intention of going up there if these good men can take me.'

Two men carried the President up with his arms around their shoulders, while another went ahead to open doors, and the rest of the entire party followed. The Prime Minister suggested that someone bring along a wicker chair so the President could rest if he wanted to *en route*. The Prime Minister and I brought up the rear of the party. He was in high spirits, and kept humming and singing to himself a little tune with the words: 'Oh, there ain't no war, there ain't no war.' The President didn't rest *en route*, but amidst much laughing on his part and sympathizing with his carriers went straight up to the open terrace, some sixty steps above. There the chair was arranged for him close to the parapet where he could command the entire view of the High Atlas range.

We all looked out for a quarter of an hour or so at this most superb view. Never have I seen the sun set on those snow-capped peaks with such magnificence. There had evidently been snow storms recently in the mountains, for they were white almost to their base, and looked more wild and rugged than ever, their sheer walls rising some 12,000 feet before us. The range runs more or less from east to west, and the setting sun over the palm oasis to our right shed a pink light on the snowy flank of the mountains. With the clear air, and the snow on the

range, it looked near enough for us to reach out and touch its magnificence. As the sun went down the air grew chilly, and the Prime Minister, seeing the President had shed his coat at tea on the sunny terrace, sent someone down for it and himself put it over the President's shoulders. From where we sat, we could see the whole town of Marrakesh below us, its walls a deeper rose than usual, its mosque towers rising high in the rosy light.

The whole town is dominated by the famous Koutoubiya tower and the President asked me about it. I told him how it had been built by Arab invaders at the end of the twelfth century, and that it was designed by the same architect who had built the more famous Giralda tower in Seville, and the unfinished tower of Hassan in Rabat, as well as the magnificent ruined tower in Tlemcen in Algeria.

Just as the sun set (we were all silent) the electric light on the top of every mosque tower in Marrakesh flashed on to indicate to the faithful the hour of prayer. There was a feeling of suppressed drama in the landscape at this moment, heightened by the beauty of the mountains and the thickening light. The points of electric light on all the mosque towers was like a gong announcing the end of the day. From where we were, we could see the going and coming of the innumerable Arabs on camel- and mule-back, as they made their way in and out of the city gate of Bab Khemis. Both Mr Roosevelt and Mr Churchill were spellbound by the view, but it became perceptibly colder, and the whole party started down again. (Marrakesh is too hot in the sun, even in winter, but at night the water in the fountains sometimes freezes.)

The great men went to their rooms to rest and dress before dinner, while the younger fry had drinks in the *salon*. The gaily painted shutters and the great doors leading out onto the terrace had been closed, the central heating had been turned on, and lights turned up that showed off the beauties of the ceiling decoration.

Cocktails were at eight o'clock, and dinner at eight fifteen. There were thirty people staying in the house, but the main dining-room could only hold fourteen, so the others ate in the servants' dining-room. When I reached the *salon* at eight, the President had left his wheel-chair, and was alone, stretched out on one of the couches at the far end of the *salon* near the dining-room door. As I came up to him, he put out his hand to me, and said with an engaging smile: 'I am the Pasha, you may kiss my hand.' Then the others arrived, the

Prime Minister in what has been called his 'siren suit', heavy blue flannel, made like a boiler suit with a belt that buckled over his well-rounded figure, and wearing black velvet slippers, like pumps, with 'W.C.' embroidered on them. The President had an old fashioned, and the others one of Louis's magnificent concoctions, a sort of cross between a side-car and a martini. Louis always carefully made one cocktail for each guest and no more: seconds could be had only if someone refused the first round.

When dinner was announced, the President was wheeled up to his place and then transferred into one of the mammoth dining-room chairs. I had the honour of sitting between the Prime Minister and the President, with Averell Harriman and Harry Hopkins beyond.

Louis outdid himself, with Army help, on the dinner, which included lobster, *filet mignon*, salad with *pâté*, and a peculiarly magnificent dessert, which arrived after an agonizing pause (for the host), and was a complete surprise to me. It was a *profiterolle*, a *pièce montée* as Louis proudly called it—at least three feet high, a reproduction in nougat of the Koutoubiya tower with a candle inside to make the effect still more dazzling, and a sort of substructure of spun sugar, perhaps representing the Atlas.

The Prime Minister turned to me and said: 'I see the pastry cooks have been busy for days and days, preparing for our secret visit.' Then he looked incredulously at the platter and said: 'How on earth does one attack a thing like that? That's easy,' he added, and, looking up at the soldier passing it, said with a smile, 'My man, you should pass that to the President first.' The soldier stepped around to the President, who said: 'Why that's easy, Winston, this is the way you do it,' and he took the top off the Koutoubiya tower, and laid it on his plate.

My first conversation at dinner was with the President. He told me about his talk with the Sultan and the extraordinary interest he found the Sultan took in America and everything American. We then talked at length about Morocco and the Arab problem. To my amazement and delight I found that the President had an extraordinary and profound grasp of Arab problems, of the conflict of Koranic law with our type of modern life and its influence on Mohammedans, and of the Arab character with its combination of materialism and highly developed intuition. He even had all the facts of our unique diplomatic position in Morocco at his finger tips, down to the names of the treaties and the dates. (I must have become over-enthusiastic in this

conversation with the President for, some six months later, when I was in London talking with Averell Harriman, he began to laugh and said: 'I will never forget your conversation with the President. I enjoyed hearing you explain to him, in no uncertain terms, that the New Deal simply wouldn't work in Morocco.')

I told the President that his letter to the Sultan had caused much excitement among the Arabs, and that they had been flattered to be treated, for once, with the respect they felt due their sovereignty. The President felt that the Sultan's answer to his letter was not of the quality or tone he would expect from the man who had dined with him the other night. He seemed much interested in the Moroccan gossip that there were actually two answers to his letter, one written by the Sultan himself and the other by his Grand Vizier.\*

My next conversation was with the Prime Minister. I asked him about de Gaulle: he looked annoyed and replied with a typical Churchillian phrase: 'Oh, let's don't speak of him. We call him Jeanne d'Arc and we're looking for some bishops to burn him.' After this, our conversation grew into a three-cornered, half-joking one with Mr Hopkins, who began teasing both the Prime Minister and the President about how little work they had done at Anfa. He said, 'You seem to think you've accomplished a lot of work at Casablanca, but Murphy did the work, and you know it.' The Prime Minister said: 'Now, Harry, when you get back, urge on everyone the importance of getting arms over here as quickly as possible. It's the only way to build up the French.' A moment later, he added: 'You know, Harry, you missed your vocation. You would have been a great strategical general.'

When I turned to the President again, I told him I had just had word from England that a very dear friend of mine, Lady Berkeley, had lost her husband. I knew this would interest Mr Roosevelt because Lady Berkeley was a close friend and cousin of his. He was distressed to hear the news, and later I learned that he wrote her a long letter. It was Lord Berkeley, he said, who had taught him to swim when he was a little boy at Homburg, where he had gone with his mother who was taking the cure. 'And,' he added in the letter, 'you know, Molly, what swimming has meant to me in my life.'

In the course of dinner I heard the President express his deep

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\* There *were* two letters. The one written by the Grand Vizier had been dictated by the French Resident General

admiration for the French and French civilization, and his deep concern for France's future.\* There was much talk about the French Army and the wisdom in building it up to the greatest possible size in order to give back to France not only her self-respect but her great-power status, so necessary to the democratic Atlantic world.

Once dinner was finished, the President proposed a toast 'To the King.' Everyone, except the President, rose to his feet, then the Prime Minister proposed a toast 'To the President.'

I was struck by the fact that, though Mr Churchill spoke much more amusingly than the President, it was Mr Roosevelt who dominated any room they were in, not merely because he was President of the United States, but because he had more spiritual quality than Mr Churchill, and, I could not help but feel, a more profound understanding of human beings. I was very much surprised by this because, having seen Mr Churchill often in the pre-war days, I had felt sure that no one could eclipse his personality.

About midnight we left the dining-room,† and found a table laid out with drinks and a mighty display of sandwiches and other titbits. Louis had surpassed himself again. After a nibble or two the two great men set to work. The problem was to arrange a temporary sort of writing table for them and adequate light: the *salon* at La Saadia was not meant for work. We finally perched a lamp up high on two tables, so as to give adequate light, and arranged two chairs on either side. Then Mr Hopkins and Mr Harriman sat down to work with them. They were composing a summary of the Anfa Conference and messages to General Chiang Kai-shek and Marshal Stalin.‡ The Prime

\* The President's greatest concern was how in the future France, weakened by defeat, could possibly control her vast empire

† Mr Churchill in his *The Hinge of Fate* says of this dinner: 'We had a very jolly dinner, about fifteen or sixteen, and we all sang songs. I sang, and the President joined in the choruses, and at one moment was about to try a solo. However, someone interrupted and I never heard this.' Unfortunately Mr Churchill must have mixed this with some other dinner. We were fourteen at table and did have 'a jolly dinner' but there was no singing either during or after, when both the Prime Minister and the President worked with deep concentration until nearly three o'clock in the morning on their messages to Stalin and Chiang Kai-shek

‡ There was deep concentration on this message to Marshal Stalin because he did not consider Allied action in North Africa in late 1942 in any way equalled the second front in Europe which he so much needed, and which was promised by his Anglo-American Allies

Minister's two secretaries, Mr Rowan and Mr Martin, were established in the library, typing and drafting these documents. Mr Hopkins and Mr Harriman would take parts of them to their separate rooms and work on them and then come back into the *salon* and show them to the Big Two. The rest of us went outside into the courtyard, and some of the party went to bed. From time to time, work would stop for a moment, and we would all be called in for a drink or a sandwich, and a joke or two. At one point, the President was wheeled into his room so that he could work alone at a dressing-table which he used as a desk.

Finally, about 3.30 a.m., the documents were composed and in final order. Both men seemed much relieved and very pleased. The whole atmosphere of the evening was that of the end of a long period of work, successfully accomplished. Both men had a catching quality of optimism, but with the President I kept feeling that it was tinged with a deep realization of far distant and over-all problems. The Prime Minister seemed much more in the present and more of an extrovert. The President, on the other hand, often sat gazing into space as he worked. That night he had a look that was not exactly sad, yet it was the look of someone who comprehended sadness.

During the working period I heard strange noises in the back court. I went out to investigate, and found Sawyers had misjudged the strength of Moroccan wine but was still full of cockney dignity. Louis assured me that the Prime Minister's hot-water-bottle was already in place, and that Sawyers wouldn't be missed.

As the party collected in the *salon* for a final night-cap, the Prime Minister moved over and relaxed on the sofa where the President had sat before dinner. The President turned to him and said: 'Now, Winston, don't you get up in the morning to see me off. I'll be wheeled into your room to kiss you goodbye.' 'Not at all, Mr President,' was the reply, 'I can get into my rompers in two twos, and I'll be on hand to see you off.' His 'siren suit' did indeed look like blue-grey rompers as he sat relaxed on the sofa with his round figure and his gay pink and white face.

I think that only once did I hear the Prime Minister call the President 'Franklin', and I am not wholly sure of that. He invariably called him 'Mr President'. The President, on the other hand, almost always called the Prime Minister 'Winston'.

The President's departure was scheduled for 7.30 a.m. from the



villa, and the aeroplane was to leave at 8.00. Prompt as royalty, the President was wheeled out to the front steps at 7.30. He had breakfasted in his room. Only the Prime Minister and I went to the airport to see him off. All the Americans left with the President except Averell Harriman, who took a plane later in the morning to Gibraltar and London. (It was this plane that crashed at Gibraltar, killing Brigadier Dykes, but only shaking up Mr Harriman.) I gave him, as I did everyone who went to England, great baskets of oranges, lemons and grapefruit, forgotten wonders in England, to take with him to London.

The Prime Minister and the President rode together. When we reached the airport, there was a cordon of guards all around the field almost invisible in the early-morning mist that hung over the field. Above this mist one could see the clearly outlined and sunlit peaks of the High Atlas range. Lying at their feet like a great bird was the magnificent aeroplane to take the President back home, a wooden ramp up its side. As soon as we arrived, Mr Churchill jumped out and ran up the ramp to see where the President was going to sit. This time the Prime Minister had on the weirdest outfit I have ever seen. The base was his 'siren suit'. He also wore his black velvet slippers with 'W.C.' on them, an Air Marshal's blue cap, and, over his suit, a dressing gown with a black velvet collar and cuffs, made out of what looked like a patchwork quilt. With all this, he had the inevitable huge cigar.

On his way down the ramp the cameramen started to take a picture of the Prime Minister in this very original costume. He stopped, took the cigar out of his mouth, and using it as a pointer, shook it at them with a smile on his face and said, 'You simply cannot do this to me.' They all laughed and lowered their cameras. He said goodbye to the President at the foot of the ramp, then, turning to me, said: 'Come, Pendar, let's go home. I don't like to see them take off.'

We climbed into the limousine, and I looked out of the back window to see the plane start up. By then the engines were roaring, the sun was breaking through the mist with a magnified brilliance, and the outlines of the mountains and the palm oasis around us became more distinct. The field and the surrounding country were so flat that the airport seemed the biggest in the world. Although the plane was enormous, it looked tiny in all that space. Mr Churchill said: 'Don't tell me when they take off. It makes me far too nervous.' Then, putting his hand on my arm, he went on: 'If anything happened to that man, I couldn't stand it. He is the truest friend; he has the farthest

vision; he is the greatest man I've ever known.' With this, we lapsed into silence. A little later, he asked, 'Pendar, don't you think your countrymen will be thrilled when they hear that their President has flown here with the courage of an eagle, and has seen and reviewed the troops in the theatre of battle? Don't you think they will be universally thrilled by this, and that it will catch their imagination?' I could only agree, adding that we are, however, a very unpredictable people. Mr Churchill's comment made me realize, however, that the President must have thought very long before making the decision to come to Morocco, a decision which, apparently, Mr Churchill had encouraged.

Just as we approached the villa, a French officer friend of mine rode by on his horse. Almost snarling, the Prime Minister said: 'Look at that little yellow Frenchman. Why isn't he fighting?' I said, 'I don't think you can say that about that particular man. He's a friend of mine, and I know how desperately anxious he is to fight.' At this point, a couple of Arabs went by on mule-back, and the Prime Minister was distracted. He quickly held up two fingers in the V sign for victory. They stared at us in amazement and delight.

Back at the villa, we went in to breakfast and found the rest of the party at table. Sir Charles Wilson (now Lord Moran), the Prime Minister's doctor, who was always vainly trying to cut down the Prime Minister's smoking, sat opposite. Mr Churchill looked at him jauntily and said, rolling his cigar around in his mouth: 'There is one nice thing, Sir Charles, about getting up early in the morning. You can get in an extra cigar.' After some coffee Mr Churchill retired to bed again, and an hour or two later Field-Marshal Sir Alan Brooke (later Lord Alanbrooke), C.I.G.S., arrived with other officers.

Soon, there was a terrific commotion outside the Prime Minister's room, and I was told he was in a vile humour storming around the blue-green-and-silver bed like a furious cherub. Finally, there were loud shouts of 'Sawyers, my painting things. Please put them out on the tower.' A sigh of relief went through the British officers. This, I learned, meant the humour had changed to a good one. I sent in word that luncheon would be at one o'clock on the terrace. About eleven o'clock the Prime Minister emerged in a smock and an enormous hat, and went up to the tower where he began painting the view we had admired the night before. He worked under an umbrella, and the silhouette of the Prime Minister and the umbrella could be seen all

over Marrakesh, verifying all the rumours that were flying around. This picture, incidentally, turned out very well, and was sent to the President as a souvenir of the visit.\*

The Prime Minister was in towering good spirits at luncheon. By this time even the American guards had left the property, and had been replaced by Royal Marine guards, beautifully trained and very military. As we sat at table we could see the guard across the garden marching up and down with magnificent precision on the path next to the wall. Right beside us on the terrace, walking up and down around the corner of the villa outside the Prime Minister's bedroom, was another Marine guard in battledress, with gun and tin hat jauntily cocked over one eye. Each time he made his turns, as he arrived at the terrace where we were, then walked away and made a half-turn to go on towards the front door, the turn was a work of art. Never have I seen anything so precise or so deliberate. During the whole meal, this fascinated the Prime Minister, and twice he got up from his seat and ran down to the corner of the house to watch the guard turn by the front door. He came back each time saying, 'Isn't he wonderful, that guard? Have you ever seen such perfection?'

It was a beautiful day, and the sunlight dappled the white flower-embroidered tablecloth through the leaves of the olive tree that shaded us. As Louis brought on *hors d'oeuvre*, then a kidney pie, and finally *tournedos*, the Prime Minister, smacking his lips and sunk down in his chair, shaded by his big hat, said: 'Two meat courses in one meal! Don't tell Lord Woolton' (the British Minister of Food). During the meal, the Prime Minister spoke of the fusion and closer Anglo-American co-operation that must exist for the future world. In speaking of an eventual common currency for the two countries, he picked up a pencil and on the back of a scrap of paper drew the symbol of the pound sterling with a dollar sign superimposed on it, saying, 'This is as I see it—the money of the future, the dollar sterling.'

As the conversation went on, he turned to me and said: 'Pendar, what a wonderful country, this Morocco, all this sunlight, this wonderful air, these flowers. We English have always needed a place like this to come to for sunshine.' Then, straightening up in his chair,

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\* This picture was chosen by one of the Roosevelt children as part of their father's inheritance and was eventually sold. It is now the property of Mr Norman G. Hickman of New York

and making a gesture towards me, he said mockingly: 'Now, Pendar, why don't you give us Morocco, and we shall give you India. We shall even give you Gandhi, and he's awfully cheap to keep, now that he's on a hunger strike.'

Captain Randolph Churchill, all during luncheon, had been arguing with his father, leading him on in a discussion about the much-discussed Beveridge Plan for Social Security in England. During this conversation, the Prime Minister repeated: 'Yes, that's all very well, but some arrangement will have to be made whereby the careful savings made in insurance companies by good earnest widows and poor people aren't just scrapped.'

Then the subject shifted again and the Prime Minister described in detail the financial and other problems he had had to deal with in Cyprus when years before he had been in the Colonial Office. Finally, he turned to India. He said, largely for my benefit, I felt: 'There are always earnest spinsters in Pennsylvania, Utah, Edinburgh, or Dublin, persistently writing letters and signing petitions and ardently giving their advice to the British Government, urging that India be given back to the Indians and South Africa back to the Zulus or Boers, but,' he continued, 'as long as I am called by His Majesty the King to be his First Minister, I shall not assist at the dismemberment of the British Empire.' Churchill, in conversation, constantly uses phrases from his speeches, and, as he talks, appears to be inspired to coin phrases, brilliant ones, and seems mentally to note them down for future use. 'And,' he continued, at this time, looking across at the Marine guard by the garden wall, 'just as I am sure that if at this moment someone came over the garden wall to attack us while we are lunching here that Marine guard would willingly give his life to protect us; so I shall, with the last drop of energy I have in me, defend His Majesty's Empire; and I hope I can do as good a job as I am certain that Marine would.'

After luncheon, he went up again into the tower to finish his picture, and came down about tea time, and sat around the drawing-room in a state of vocal indecision as to whether to leave at once or to stay through the night. He couldn't make up his mind whether he should go directly back to England to answer the questions that would come up in the House of Commons as soon as news of the Casablanca Conference was released, or if he should go on east to Cairo and the Turkish frontier where he planned to meet President Ismet Inonu of

Turkey, to try to stop up the last hole through which there still was a threat of German aggression. He discussed this all quite openly with everyone, asking their advice. Finally he left at 6.30 that night for Cairo, in his small plane. Sir Charles Wilson and Commander Thompson asked me to have a supper prepared for them to take in the plane, and gave me the official luncheon basket.

At the airport, Mr Churchill, unlike the President, would not quietly board his plane and leave, as the guards wanted him to do, but insisted on talking to everyone he saw around, thanking them for their courtesy and attention, and discussing with them any problem that came into his head. I was told that the security people had a terrible time with him wherever he went. Before he left the villa, he handed out some signed photographs to those of the American soldier household staff who had had courage enough to ask him for one. Just as he was leaving, he said to me, 'Now, Pendar, I would like to send you a copy of one of my books. Which would you like, *The Life of Marlborough* or *The World Crisis*?' I hesitated, and he added: 'Oh, we're not out of the world crisis yet. I'll send you *The Life of Marlborough*. That's over.'

The next morning a steady stream of sightseers, reporters and soldiers came to ask to see the villa and the gardens where the President and the Prime Minister had stayed. I had several fantastic offers to buy the bed in which the President had slept.

The news of the Casablanca Conference and the Marrakesh visit were released on the following Tuesday, just before the President's arrival back in Washington. Shortly after, I flew back to Algiers to report to Murphy, and had the thrill of travelling for the first time in a Flying Fortress from which I could see, through the glass nose of the plane, the whole of Morocco and Algeria spread out before me, a mighty sweep of the North Africa I had learned to love so well.

The Conference was over. A short time later, I had the following letter from the President:

'That very wonderful collection of prints\* has come and will always be a reminder to me of my visit to Marrakesh. I think that if I had ever done water colours, I would have stayed over with Mr Churchill.

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\* These were thirty prints in colour from the paintings of Jacques Majorelle of the *kasbahs* of the Atlas Mountains. They are now in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park, New York

#### ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

‘What an amazing house you live in! All of our party was struck by the beauty of the house and the gardens, and I think we envied you your post.

‘It seemed, and still seems, difficult to realize in those peaceful surroundings that French North Africa has become such a political football. Marrakesh seemed far from wars and rumours of wars.’

## The Fine Art of Politics

After the Casablanca Conference, de Gaulle for a time seemed much more friendly to both England and America. The British, who had been worried by his flirtations with Moscow, were reassured by his apparent return into the western world, and new efforts were made by their representatives and ours to try to bring all Frenchmen into one fair, carefully planned, provisional government. Giraud took part in this without enthusiasm, he wished to concentrate on the war in Tunisia.

An intense political period now began in Algiers, full of events even more turgid than our pre-landing intrigue or the machinations leading to Darlan's assassination. These post-Conference manoeuvres were what finally made me realize the full dangers of Gaullism, and turned me from what my French friends called 'the most Gaullist of the American vice-consuls' into the state of mind that must, by this time, be obvious to the reader. All the doubts and qualms I had had about de Gaulle before, from reading his books, from his speeches, from his intransigence with us and with other French groups, had been only premonitory twinges, a suspicion that the man I had hoped would restore France to national health might, like many other great men, have feet of clay. By the summer of 1943 I knew that the situation wasn't as simple as that: that de Gaulle, who really is a great man in the Carlyle sense, is great in all the wrong ways, in ways that are ominous for the peace and happiness of France and of Europe. I won't pretend that this was a brilliant discovery of my own: plenty of others knew it then too. But by that time public opinion as a whole had been well mobilized behind de Gaulle.

Well-meaning, honest Giraud undoubtedly helped as much as anyone to bring about the triumph of de Gaulle in North Africa, which meant his political domination later in liberated France. Mr Murphy tried to steer Giraud, particularly in the matter of cleaning out officials tinged with anti-Allied feeling, but Murphy's piloting was never

vigorous enough. Rigault pleaded with Giraud during January and February, urging him to make a speech announcing the wiping out of all the restrictive Vichy legislation. Giraud finally did make this speech on 14 March, but by that time it was too late. His character had been established by the foreign press and the Gaullists as a reactionary, Vichy-minded general. He was accused of being anti-Semitic, a manifestly untrue charge. For the Committee of French Liberation, which Giraud later formed with de Gaulle, it was Giraud who nominated two Jewish members, René Mayer, in charge of Communications, and Jules Abadie, in charge of Justice, Education and Health. Rigault, like Murphy, urged Giraud to get rid of the worst of the Vichyites in North Africa, the Yves Chatels and Noguès who gave fuel to every fire of criticism in England and America. But to all these arguments, in that winter of 1942-3, the old soldier merely replied that he was busy with the war, that politics must wait, and that it was no moment to try to find out, in the North African political mists, which men of all ranks had been collaborationists, which loyal, in a misguided but not vicious way, to Pétain.

The criticism around Giraud grew even worse when Marcel Peyrouton was called in to succeed Yves Chatel, who was finally ousted as Governor of Algeria. Peyrouton had been Resident General in Tunisia at one time, but was Vichy's Ambassador to the Argentine before he came to Algiers. He was known as a tough and able administrator, with a knowledge of Arabs and of the whole North African world—something we very much needed at the moment. We had reason, as a matter of fact, to think that he was far from being a collaborationist: he had personally arrested Laval at the time of his purge in late 1940. His appointment produced a tornado of understandable criticism in the Anglo-American press. The M. Chevereux who tried to get Noguès on our side before the landings was Murphy's second choice. He too had held office under Vichy, however, so he might have been equally unpopular with the public.

As Giraud concentrated on the war and ignored all political rumblings, and as we allowed him to do this, still with the idea that we were keeping hands off French affairs, American prestige began to fall in North Africa. The representatives of the O.W.I. (Office of War Information), O.S.S. (Office of Strategic Services) and other Washington agencies who came to North Africa were at loggerheads with the State Department policy. The heads of all the agencies co-operated,



but their subordinates left the French feeling that we, as Americans, had no clear policy or ideology of any kind. Newspaper writers as well as radio commentators, like Charles Collingwood and Edward Murrow, were often passionately critical of our entire North African policy. We were badly divided among ourselves on the whole French question, and there was too little integration from the very top in Washington. Absolutely contradictory directives arrived from different departments or from men presumed to be 'close to the White House'.

This sort of spotty and confusing policy was too reminiscent of the France of the thirties. Our whole official line should have been thoroughly canvassed at home, both officially in Washington and fully and freely in the press. The policy finally decided upon should have been explained frankly and clearly to the world. Once it was decided, and backed by the American people, we representatives in the field from State, O.W.I., O.S.S. and the rest, should have either co-operated or gone home. As it was, the State Department sulked in wounded dignity in its tent while it was so widely misunderstood, and the British-American press was thoroughly indoctrinated by the extremely articulate Gaullist forces. By the time official interpretation came, it was too late. Demaree Bess's articles, Kenneth Crawford's book on North Africa, Robert Sherwood's inspection trip, during which he came to agree with the State Department, all came after the harm had been done. By that time, we had so thoroughly washed our own dirty linen in public that we stood out as fumbling and confused amateurs in the international diplomatic scene. Everything that happened in North Africa that annoyed anyone, from food problems to the delay in restoring civil rights to the Jews, was thenceforth blamed on America and her inexperienced and divided cohorts on the scene.

At this point it seems obvious the State Department should have put their entire negotiations in North Africa into fresh hands. Mr Murphy was too tired and overworked to take vigorous action. Above all a fresh point of view was needed, and an envoy of Cabinet rank, if the United States' prestige was to be saved.

Our amateurishness stood out in sharp contrast to the smooth, professional functioning of our British colleagues. They had two representatives in Africa who far outranked Mr Murphy in the official scale. In Accra they had Viscount Swinton, a man of Cabinet calibre. In Algiers the British Minister was Harold Macmillan, who had been for nearly twenty years a member of Parliament. He was appointed by Mr

Churchill as Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and often sat with the War Cabinet. He was a man of wide background and distinction. With him were Roger Makins and Harold Caccia, both younger, brilliant Foreign Office officials. (Both were later British Ambassadors in Washington, and still hold important posts in their country.) None of them had any commitments to any particular person or group in North Africa—a fact which from the start gave them a better bargaining position than Murphy, who was still morally obligated to all our useful but unreliable pre-landing underground.

After our landings de Gaulle had not only ignored Giraud and the North African Army but had allowed his organization in their broadcasts to France to deny any connection with the Frenchmen in North Africa then fighting the Germans at our side. This had effectively put out of the question any negotiations between Giraud and de Gaulle until they had been almost forcibly brought together at Casablanca. After the Conference, the British-American matchmakers set painfully to work again to try to prevent French disunity from hampering the war effort.

The first move was the flying trip made by John McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War and that Department's political man, in February 1943. He came to try to achieve better collaboration between the military and political forces in North Africa, and he also discussed with Mr Murphy the forthcoming arrival of a new figure in the African drama and a close friend of Mr McCloy's: Jean Monnet.

Mr Churchill had already suggested to Giraud, at the Casablanca Conference, that he send for Monnet, a pro-British Frenchman who had been in the United States for several years, and who was a friend of such varied Washington figures as Justice Felix Frankfurter and our ex-Ambassador to France, William Bullitt. Among his refugee backers was André Meyer, a Frenchman in New York and a Lazard Bank partner. Giraud finally accepted Monnet as his technical adviser after McCloy's visit and shortly Monnet himself arrived in Algiers.

On the surface Monnet seemed just what was needed in the disturbing Anglo-American scene. He had ties with everybody. A wealthy cognac manufacturer and banker, he had first appeared on the international stage at Geneva, where he worked in the Secretariat of the League of Nations. He left Geneva to become a partner in Blair and Company, international bankers, and was also closely associated with Lazard Bank and other international banking organizations. Just before

the war he was in this country placing orders for armaments. During the first stage of the war he had been in England and then on the French Purchasing Commission in the United States. After France fell he moved over onto the British Supply Council, to merge the remaining French contracts with theirs. He knew everyone, everywhere, and already had the reputation in London and in Washington of being a Frenchman the Anglo-Saxon 'could do business with'.

Although Monnet supposedly came to Algiers as a technician to expedite American arming of the North African Army, he soon became a key political man. This was considered hopeful in Algiers. He was reputed to be a top negotiator, a mediator, a man who could bring the two poles together into a happy equator. In a situation that desperately needed a solvent it was hoped that he might be the colourless liquid that would resolve all our difficulties. It was also believed that he would be able to do this as a skilled business negotiator operates, and in full sympathy with the American official policy of keeping any one faction from dominating the French political scene.

Seldom have hopes been more disappointed. Monnet ended up by simply handing North Africa to de Gaulle, and helping him to ease other Frenchmen out of the picture with the adroitness of a party chairman at a presidential convention. He did this without the knowledge of all his old American friends and supporters and in violation of many statements of his own in Washington. Others, like André Meyer, knew he had gone to Algiers for this purpose.

Monnet arrived in North Africa as an experienced traveller, a sophisticated man of the world, might arrive in a provincial capital. He seemed so rich, spoke in such big figures, was apparently so familiar with power in all its material forms, knew the answers to all questions, had lived so long in so many more important capitals, appeared to be so intimate with the great and near-great of every country, that he dazzled the North African colonials as well as a good many Americans. In spite of warnings to the contrary, Mr Murphy rapidly became convinced that Monnet was not only a brilliant but a reliable implementer of the American policy of keeping French politics out of the war. His point of view was reinforced by Monnet's backers in Washington. The English, however, knew him well and were always inclined to watch and direct him carefully. We didn't because we were unaware.

Some political observers who watched Monnet work in Algiers in the spring of 1943 suspected that he was hoping to see de Gaulle and

Giraud consume each other like the calico cat and the china dog. They seemed equally matched politically at that time, our backing of Giraud balancing de Gaulle's superior public relations and his Foreign Office connections. With the generals out of the way, Monnet may easily have hoped to emerge as a key political figure in postwar France. For a time the British were worried about his strategy, of which our diplomats at first were unaware. For the British certainly believed from the start that Monnet was completely behind their political line, just as Americans in Washington and Algiers were convinced that he believed in keeping French political factions out of war.

Monnet's conversation, which was widely repeated in Algerian social circles, seemed to confirm British fears. He was as contradictory with different groups here as he had been in London and Washington. He told North Africans generally, for instance, that he was heartily in sympathy with the American policy there. Yet he equally insisted to an anti-de Gaulle Frenchman I knew, that he, Monnet, believed that de Gaulle should take over. He may, of course, have been simply feeling his way, trying, in the manner of the *entrepreneur*, to sense the strength of the political forces.

Giraud, who longed for more material for the French forces, was given to understand that Monnet was the only man who could get him all the guns and tanks he needed. Monnet moved in not only as Giraud's technical aide but as his political adviser, too, and for a brief moment we even proposed to give him a desk in our own Civil Affairs offices, where he would have seen all official American correspondence. Luckily, more cynical counsels prevailed, and he moved into French headquarters.

Though Monnet had been sent over from Washington as someone in total sympathy with our hands-off-politics views, he soon showed that he not only did not intend to represent a Franco-American point of view but did not even share our ideas. He gave Giraud to understand in April 1943, for instance, that Washington would withhold further military supplies to the French unless the Gaullist and Giraudist forces were merged. This was totally untrue: our policy then, as always, was to arm anti-Nazi Frenchmen regardless of their shades of political feeling. If Monnet had been really anxious for a fusion between the armies he should have firmly urged Giraud to invite de Gaulle again to come and take his place as a soldier in the fighting in Tunisia. Monnet never gave Giraud this advice. Instead de Gaulle was

allowed to build himself up as the martyred war leader, snubbed by his North African countrymen and their American allies.

Such military unity would have done much to produce political unity, and to assuage the anti-Gaullists' feeling that de Gaulle did more talking than fighting during the war. In the light of Monnet's subsequent manoeuvres, however, it became obvious to Americans on the scene that the clue to his actions could be found in his close relations with the Foreign Office. Though he came via Washington he had long been associated with British interests, and his policies, during the formation of the French Committee of Liberation, became more and more those of the Foreign Office and of de Gaulle. Monnet was to prove a great disillusionment to his Washington backers.

By that time, the American Army was in North Africa in force and we could have successfully sponsored de Gaulle as a military figure though not as a political one. This would have demonstrated that neither the Giraud group or ourselves had any personal prejudice against him and that we were only seeking to submerge politics and produce military unity.

Monnet did finally manage to get an exchange of letters started between Giraud and de Gaulle in the spring of 1943. On his side, Giraud stressed the Constitution of 1875, and urged that any temporary French Government remain within that Constitution and reiterate its determination to restore French rights intact after her liberation. He dwelt on the Tréveneuc Law\* of 1872 as the procedure for this restoration. De Gaulle heartily agreed: he himself had cited the Tréveneuc Law as one of his basic principles in his Brazzaville Declaration.† He added: 'I strongly oppose the building up of personal power by any individual or group, or the introduction of totalitarian methods.' We soon heard more and more talk of de Gaulle's coming to North Africa, and of the formation of a Committee as a sort of provisional government, holding France's sovereignty in trust until the liberation. Early that spring de Gaulle sent, as his ambassador to Giraud, General Catroux. Catroux had been in command of the region of Marrakesh at one time, and knew North Africa well. He had been out in Indo-China in 1940, managed to get through to Singapore and finally to London, where he joined de Gaulle. Polished and adroit, like Noguès, he had had long colonial experience and even thought and

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\* See Appendix VI, p. 259

† See Appendix V, p. 254

acted, the Algerians said, more like an Arab than a Frenchman.

As Monnet talked to Catroux and both listened to the Foreign Office and watched our own incredible fumbling and confusion, they obviously realized that the dynamic Gaullist forces already had a dramatic lead over Giraud, and that the official American policy of keeping any one political group from getting control of postwar France was doomed to fail. Monnet's conversation became more and more overtly Gaullist, and I was told on high authority that he even suggested to one American Gaullist from another agency that things might be 'arranged' to recall Murphy and have him take Murphy's place.

Though when he arrived he had been looked upon as a mediator, Monnet was already distinctly on one side rather than in the middle. By this time Monnet's position had become so inflated by Algerian gossip of his high connections and his letters supposedly direct from the White House that he eclipsed Mr Murphy, who actually held the title of Personal Representative of the President at Algiers. Murphy, his new assistant, Samuel Reber, and Giraud, however, still felt sure that Monnet would manage to do the necessary conciliatory job, in spite of warnings from within the Civil Affairs office and even from Washington. The State Department, in fact, was by this time thoroughly alarmed at the reports of Monnet's activities and at the dominance he had assumed over our own strategy. Warnings were sent, but Monnet's Algiers and Washington backers continued to reassure Mr Murphy.

In the midst of all this intrigue, on 14 February, North Africa was suddenly brought to its war senses by the Allied reverses inflicted by the enemy. If the advance of Rommel's Afrika Korps at the Kesserine Pass in Tunisia had not been stopped the very safety of Algiers itself would have been threatened. With the danger passed, however, the Tunisian battlefields once more seemed far away to the politicians in Algiers.

I was still stationed in Morocco at this time, but I saw the Algiers situation crystallizing on my frequent extended trips there. Although no workable agreement had yet been reached between de Gaulle and Giraud, Gaullist officers and agents from London began to trickle down to North Africa in considerable numbers. The British sent them in and this helped very much to trouble further the African picture. In Morocco, following a definite plan, they circulated with lists of key

officers and men they were to see. Many of the officers approached by these Gaullists came to see me in great consternation. The thing that horrified them the most was the anti-American attitude of the Gaullists. Sometimes this was shown, I was told, by subtle implication in attacking Giraud and sometimes quite openly in attacking us. I was even approached by some and clearly sensed the depth of their factionalism.

One of the things that began to worry our men in Algiers more and more was the direct recruiting the Gaullists were now doing in the very barracks of the Giraud forces. Gaullist agents set up shop near the troops' barracks, and, in a way that was really reckless in the midst of a dangerous campaign against the Germans, persuaded men and officers alike to desert to de Gaulle with offers of better pay and higher rank. During the following months desertions rose into the thousands, and there was a large, secret, deserters' camp near Algiers.\*

Giraud became alarmed. He felt that the French military performance in Tunisia was vital to prove France's courage to the world and restore her self-respect. By the late spring of 1943, several officers, whom I shall have occasion to mention later, had come to Algiers to help Giraud in his effort to rebuild France's military strength. One of them was General Robert Odic, once head of North African air forces for Weygand, who had recently been in the United States. Another was Admiral Muselier, a former Gaullist who joined Giraud from London and who was put in charge of the military security of Algiers and the environs. Both were honest and capable officers although neither had very recent contact with France. Giraud was never able to bring out from France the able men he should have had in North Africa. One reason was that our diplomats did not realize the need for them, and another was because there was a Foreign Office Gaullist control over liaison with the French underground. Only those passed by London could be brought out from France.

When I was living in Algiers in May, I often consulted Muselier when friends of French soldiers in Tunisia came to me in consternation about the desertions going on, and the persuasion being used to make them desert. In July a report on this whole subject was sent to President Roosevelt and Mr Churchill by the French High Command.† Most soldiers, of course, remained loyal and stayed at the front in their

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\* See Appendix XIX, p. 303

† See Appendix XX, p. 305

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regiments. By late spring, best estimates were that the Gaullists under arms still numbered less than 15,000, including forces outside North Africa, while the Giraud army still numbered some 125,000 men.

In April I saw Gaullist recruiting methods in Marrakesh, too. A steady stream of French airmen, soldiers and sailors escaped from France and made their way through Spain to Lisbon and thence to North Africa. (A French and an American agent—Colonel Malaise and Colonel Stevens—conned them through Spain; this was one reason why we were fairly gentle with Franco.) In North Africa, they were taken in groups to Marrakesh and kept in barracks while experts went over them carefully and weeded out any Fifth Columnists. Marrakesh was now the centre of an air network reaching Dakar, the United States and London, and so many people were flying hastily around the world that spies might easily have slipped through on forged papers.

My doctor in Marrakesh surprised me, that spring, by borrowing typewriters, typing paper and numerous other office supplies from my house. I couldn't imagine why he needed them until I began to talk to some of the young men, fresh from France, in the barracks. Then I discovered that organized Gaullist recruitment was going on there, and that my doctor wanted to use these supplies for recording enlistments. The Gaullist agents told these confused young refugees, eager to fight the Germans, that America would never arm the Giraud forces. Purely because I was the only American available, several hundred of them came individually and in small groups and talked to me. I told them, of course, that we did intend to arm the North African Army. I particularly remember two young men I had known well in France, who were in a state of despair as they realized the profound political differences that already existed between Frenchmen. They were asked if they wanted to join the de Gaulle army or the Giraud army. 'We should never have left France,' they said. 'There, at least we were united.' They went back to their barracks to think about what they should do. When I next saw them, I asked them how they had finally decided to fill in their enlistment papers. 'We simply drew a line through every question,' they said, 'and wrote, "We want to fight for France."'

At the same time, in the United States, similar methods were being used that came under the censure of our highest military authorities. Several French warships, including the great battleship *Richelieu*, had



come to United States ports. Gaullist agents in America began causing so many desertions amongst their crews that, in a press interview in Washington on 13 March 1943, the Secretary of the Navy, Knox, said, 'As a result of various circumstances, there have been numerous desertions amongst the crews of these ships, and if this continues, the vessels will be left so understaffed they will be virtually immobilized.' Efforts were made to stop desertions, but they continued to such a degree that Secretary Knox was obliged to comment again, in a press conference on 19 March. One French ship, he pointed out, had recently sailed minus forty per cent of her crew, which, as he mildly put it, 'added to the perils of her voyage'. Another French merchant ship lost eight or ten of her gun crew through desertions, and was later sunk with her American war cargo. Such French factionalism so retarded the Allied war effort that American authorities began to take a very gloomy view of the desirability of continuing to arm the French.

In April I moved back to Algiers, where I shared a villa with a British officer, Major the Viscount Duncannon, now the Earl of Bessborough, who was my opposite number on Mr Macmillan's staff. I found Giraud still reposing perfect faith in Monnet, and Murphy, like the British representative, Harold Macmillan, still urging Giraud to lean heavily on Monnet's advice and counsel. Monnet's friends in Washington were also still plugging for him, I learned. The State Department itself, as noted before, had come to feel differently. The Department's warnings, for some reason, did not seem to worry Murphy. He was apparently not worried, either, by the widespread gossip about Monnet's activities in Algiers. He had faith in the fact that both the President and Mr Churchill knew de Gaulle and were awake to the dangers of Gaullism, and he must have still hoped that Monnet could aid in forming a Provisional Government of compromise political colouring for France.

The whole atmosphere in Algiers was intensely political by this time, and the 'Battle of the Villas', as it was called, was in full swing. The Allied military situation was firmly in the capable hands of General Eisenhower. He allowed none of the miasma of political jealousies and rivalries to penetrate his headquarters at the Hotel St George. In fact he had done a great deal to clarify the whole atmosphere of Algiers by strictest disciplinary measures against any bickering between the British and Americans. General Marshall later said of Eisenhower, 'The degree of unity attained . . . was the greatest single

Allied achievement of the war.' We saw this well on the way to fulfilment in North Africa. He certainly fused the British and Americans into working allies. Unfortunately, in the diplomatic and political field there was no General Eisenhower. The strange influence of Africa had upset any real unity even between the different American agencies,\* and the centuries-old atmosphere of intriguing Algiers was far too much for the French. While the armies fought our battles in Tunisia and Giraud wanted only to hand over his political powers to a non-partisan Committee and get on with the war, a series of groups with an axe to grind used the press and pulled wires to get their way.

Gaullist agents among the French, British personnel trying to achieve French unity under British leadership, Americans in O.W.I. and O.S.S. who were sincerely (if, I think, misguided) Gaullist, all took part in this manœuvring. It is hard to understand the Gaullist *coup* in North Africa, unless one realizes the atmosphere of dissension and misunderstanding there, the fact that Murphy was very much overworked, that our military battles were desperate and absorbing, and that many people simply didn't realize the importance of the political issues being settled—or even that they were likely to be settled soon.

As Giraud and de Gaulle discussed and debated between Algiers and London through M. Monnet and General Catroux, the British enormously strengthened de Gaulle's hand by putting Madagascar under his control, and above all by deciding to channel their contact with the French military underground through his headquarters. I shall discuss this development more fully in Chapter 15. De Gaulle's closer connection with the underground was one of his strongest cards in the 1943 negotiations in Algiers.

Throughout this formative period, there is good evidence that the British, above all their Foreign Office, had a spare policy they were nursing from time to time in case we failed in our initial efforts. This was not Machiavellian on their part, as propagandists often try to make out, but merely good diplomacy. No foreign power can ultimately control the decision of the people of another power so the possibility of reserve foreign policies must always be left open. In North Africa we did not use these subtle shades so necessary in an active diplomacy. Instead, when later it was evident that our policy was not getting

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\* See footnote, p. 14

under way, we improvised as we went along, trying to repair damage as it occurred, without much plan covering any alternate choice.

Early in 1943 I began to realize there were several reasons behind the Foreign-Office-de-Gaulle policy. First, in those days I thought there was an idealistic motive due to still sincere belief in de Gaulle as a man. Second, I knew there was a realistic motive: the Foreign Office wanted to build up impaired British prestige in France not only because she is England's nearest neighbour but because she represented for England the only possible post-war force in western Europe to be used to balance Russia's growing importance. (This was to appear more clearly after the Teheran Conference.) The pattern of British Foreign Office reasons I was to see more clearly as our French dilemma drew out. On the spot in North Africa there was too much going on for deep analytical thinking.

I shall never forget the victory parade of 10 May in Tunis. A bitter battle, the first in the liberation of France, had ended. Giraud's soldiers wore the smiles of men who had restored their own self-respect. They had wiped out with their blood the bitter memories of 1940. Ill-equipped, even ill-fed, they had fought as respected allies beside the British and Americans. This should have been a day of great happiness and unity for Frenchmen. Instead it was utterly spoiled for thousands of them by the fact that the Gaullist forces under General Leclerc refused to march beside their shabby North African comrades. They withdrew themselves to a separate part of the victory parade and marched with the British. It was tragically symbolic to see the big group of North African regiments, the small group of Gaullists, marching apart from each other, all brave men, and hopelessly divided.

Finally, in May, after many false rumours, we learned that de Gaulle was definitely coming to Algiers to meet with Giraud and form a French Committee of National Liberation. During all the previous months cables had been flying hot and heavy between Algiers and London. All of them passed through the Anglo-American Civil Affairs Offices. I was amused by one reply from the Gaullist agents in Algiers to their London office early in the year. The London office had cabled to settle the details of the General's arrival. They discussed ceremonial honours, and wanted to know if suitable transportation would be at the airport for the General himself—an open car—something in which the Algerians could see him at his best. The Algiers Gaullist men cabled back 'Suggest armoured car.'

On 27 May, in order to reassure the Gaullists who said they were afraid one man or group might use the French political situation for personal advancement, Giraud issued a decree forbidding the use of pictures of any Frenchman on posters, and also forbidding the use of any political symbol. The idea was to strip North Africa clean of political atmosphere and to give the coming Committee a chance to start fresh and unprejudiced.

Like so many acts of compromise with de Gaulle, this turned out to be a purely unilateral gesture. The great man arrived by air on 30 May and went temporarily to the Germaine Villa to live. His first act was to go down to the Monument des Morts for a special service. While the General made an impressive and dramatic arrival, his agents handed out pictures of de Gaulle and pins in the shape of the Croix de Lorraine among the crowd. In a few minutes Algiers was well covered with political symbols again. While he spoke the crowd roared '*Un seul chef, de Gaulle*' in much the way that other crowds had roared for a single *Führer* ten years before. 'Such a chief is distant. . . . Below him there are murmurings. . . . (But) when the crisis arises, it is he who is followed.'\*

De Gaulle stood sternly making the sign of victory with his arms to the crowd. It was a symbol of more than one kind of victory.

North Africa is a fatally emotional and dramatic place. The Gaullist minority—which they themselves had estimated at about twenty per cent of the electorate a few weeks before—seemed to grow before our very eyes that day. You could almost hear the thunder of feet running for the bandwagon, the shiny, nationalistic bandwagon, so different from Giraud's classic and traditional vehicle, as unpretentious and French as a Paris taxi. Going back to the villa, the de Gaulle car was surrounded by motorcycles while the General rode erect within.

Back at his villa de Gaulle gave a large press conference, at which he talked darkly of the 'sovereignty' of France, which he felt had been infringed upon by the Clark-Darlan agreements, and even more darkly of 'purges'. He seemed to feel some drastic purges were needed. He followed this up two days later with a magnificent dinner to the press, including such North African rarities as lobster and turkey. It was a visible symbol of the way in which Gaullists shrewdly, and rightly, kept their publicity going. No other French group had any

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\* Quotation from de Gaulle's *Le Fil de l'Épée*; Berger-Lerrault, Paris, 1932

discernible press relations at all; and the State Department, representing our own North African policy, never seemed able to explain its own actions or counteract the Gaullist line without seeming to criticize many utterly sincere and liberal Frenchmen, Englishmen and Americans. After de Gaulle's arrival the Gaullist public relations section kept things humming in the British, United States and South American press,\* with active support from the Communists who had now attached themselves to Gaullism.

On the morning of 31 May, the French Committee of National Liberation met for the first time in Algiers. Six members had been previously agreed upon by an exchange of letters. Giraud and de Gaulle were to serve as co-chairmen; two men—Monnet and General Georges, a friend of Churchill's—were to represent the Giraud point of view on the Committee; two others represented de Gaulle's, Catroux, and René Massigli, a Foreign Office official who had been the Vichy representative in Turkey and who was now de Gaulle's Commissioner for Foreign Affairs. On the surface, everything looked promising for a genuine coalition, non-partisan trusteeship for France.

But at this point Monnet finally and fully confirmed the fears of the State Department and many highly placed men in Washington, and baffled the sincere Americans who still backed him, by throwing his weight against our policies and interests. Murphy and Reber, like many others, thought that he was genuinely interested, like ourselves, in forming a merger, or keeping a balance of powers, between the various French factions, or at least keeping any one man from using the political impotence of France to assume supreme power. He proved that he had become a Gaullist at once. At the very first meeting of the Committee, de Gaulle announced that instead of a balanced Committee of two men from each side, plus two chairmen (as had been previously arranged by letter), he wanted three men on his side. André Philip, his contact with the French Resistance Forces, would have to be put on the Committee. Monnet unexpectedly voted with de Gaulle on this, and Philip joined the Committee, which at that moment became to all intents and purposes a Gaullist group, with only Giraud and Georges left to balance de Gaulle, Philip, Catroux, Massigli and the supple M. Monnet.

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\* *France Nouvelle*, published in Buenos Aires, carried particularly violent articles and cartoons against both Mr Churchill and President Roosevelt

This sudden transformation of the Committee from impartial trustee to factional political group rocked Algiers. The first thought of Americans there was for the future of the French Army. General Eisenhower made it abundantly clear that the Supreme Command would brook no tampering with the French military command. Giraud was to keep this in his hands. (Less than a year later, poor Giraud was to be ousted from this post, too, by the Gaullists.)

I shall never forget the incredulity and dismay with which Monnet's action was received by the American diplomatic authorities in Algiers. They felt the way Eisenhower would if Giraud had suddenly decided to fight a separate campaign. From then on, Monnet had to be accounted an out-and-out Gaullist. Slamming the barn door shut after this particular horse, some old notes full of misgivings about Monnet's intentions were made up into a report and sent back to Washington.

In spite of this crisis, the Committee proceeded with its work. It announced at once that it would return French sovereignty immediately after the liberation, and that it acted only in trusteeship. Then it settled down to a series of inner manoeuvres and jockeyings from which de Gaulle was to emerge the complete master of North Africa and in which American influence, and even a feeling of friendship for us, vanished from sight. Not only at the time but upon looking back on our failure with France, it seems more obvious than ever that Murphy's and others' misplaced faith in Monnet, in Algiers, was one of our major mistakes.

## De Gaulle Captures North Africa

The next operation of the French Committee of Liberation began with a typically stormy incident.

It had been agreed between Giraud and de Gaulle that Peyrouton, then Governor General of Algeria, should resign and let General Catroux, the Gaullist, take his place. Peyrouton tried to resign to Giraud a few days before the Committee of Liberation first convened, but Giraud refused his resignation. It would be more proper, he said, for Peyrouton to resign to the Committee as a whole, to take the whole affair out of personal politics.

As the Committee met for the first time in a converted camouflaged school building, high over the teeming city of Algiers, Peyrouton dutifully sent duplicate letters of resignation to both de Gaulle and Giraud. For reasons never explained, the Giraud letter was never delivered. To Giraud's amazement Gaston Palewski, head of de Gaulle's personal cabinet, then announced, on 2 June, that Peyrouton had resigned to de Gaulle and that de Gaulle had accepted his resignation. Furthermore, it was announced that Peyrouton would immediately join the de Gaulle army in Syria with the rank of captain. The press congratulated de Gaulle on what seemed an outstanding act of statesmanship. Peyrouton telephoned Giraud in some bewilderment, found he had never received the duplicate letter, and asked him what to do. Giraud told him to do nothing until the misunderstanding could be cleared up; and not to resign until he could publicly and officially resign to the entire Committee. Peyrouton withdrew his resignation and waited.

This threw de Gaulle into a towering rage and he at once resigned from the nascent Committee.

This, it seems to me, was our big chance. No one who knew the whole inside story of exiled French politics at that time had much faith left in de Gaulle. Mr Roosevelt, Mr Churchill, the British and American diplomats and military heads on the scene, all realized that

he was at best a little unbalanced in his nationalism and egoism and a few of these realized he was possibly something much more sinister. The British point of view about him was a complicated one: he remained their best hope for a French Government friendly to Britain, and they hoped he would remain an ally, if an uncomfortable one. They were aware, too, that he had already won the first rounds and established a position that might be hard to undo without ruining Franco-British friendship in the process. But they had no illusions about him. Late in the summer of 1943 I was to learn more definitely that the Foreign Office, with understandable desire to rally post-war western Europe into a bloc sympathetic to Britain, was counting on and firmly backing de Gaulle. But by early summer these Foreign Office manoeuvrings often looked as if they were directed at having British influence unshove American influence with France.

Shortly after de Gaulle came to North Africa, there was an amusing and characteristically British exchange of cables between the Prime Minister and the British Minister in Algiers. These messages became a joke in Algiers. Churchill cabled the single, cryptic phrase: 'See Matthew 7, Verses 15-21.' Macmillan capped the quotation with 'Doing my best. See Revelations 2, Verses 2-5.' (The first reference is the famous passage beginning, 'Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheeps' clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? . . .') The second reads: 'I know thy works, and thy toil and patience, and that thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them which call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false; and thou hast patience and didst bear for my name's sake, and hast not grown weary. But I have this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love.') Because of the weight of British public opinion, thoroughly under the spell of de Gaulle propaganda, the Prime Minister was to be more and more forced into the position of very grudgingly and unwillingly backing de Gaulle.

When this heaven-sent opportunity to encompass de Gaulle's resignation dropped into our laps, however, Murphy, Reber, Macmillan and Makins were unwilling to take it. I remember going into the Civil Affairs office feeling enormously relieved that de Gaulle had at last proved to the outside world something the diplomatic world already knew: that he insisted on being supreme, solitary and responsible to no one but himself. Here, I thought, was our real chance to use



our still enormous strength in North Africa to insist upon the formation of a French Provisional Government that would be genuinely provisional, representative, and jealous of the political and personal liberties of Frenchmen until they were in a position to vote for themselves. Inside the office I was amazed to find that another opinion was held. Giraud was told not, under any circumstances, to accept de Gaulle's resignation. When I revealed my dismay, I was shown a message to reassure me. In essence, it said that Mr Churchill and the British would always prefer American friendship to French and President Roosevelt's to that of de Gaulle if there were any conflict between the two. This seemed so obvious that it did not impress me. I felt my superior was misinterpreting its significance and I told him so. The top men, I was assured, understood de Gaulle thoroughly and wouldn't let him become a menace to the freedoms of France or the peace of the world. The Committee, I was told, hadn't really formed yet. It would be much better to let de Gaulle prove his ruthlessness and will to power by allowing him to resign after the Committee was really functioning. And, the argument concluded, he was sure to do just that: he could never control himself long enough to work on a committee of any kind. Though I knew it was out of line for anyone as junior as myself to show it, I felt, and expressed, utter discouragement with this idea. About a week later, as a matter of fact, de Gaulle boiled over again and resigned a second time, but again it was felt the time was not ripe and Giraud was urged to smooth him down. If our trust in Monnet was our first diplomatic mistake, this was certainly to prove to be our second.

While the Committee of Liberation had its prolonged and painful birth, I tried to meet all the de Gaulle officials I could. I was genuinely curious to know what sort of men de Gaulle had around him and also to learn what I could of the cryptic and towering General himself.

The first thing I ran into was the *mystique* that had already risen around de Gaulle, the almost hushed reverence with which he was surrounded. A tiny but significant anecdote illustrates this. I went to pay a formal call, in the correct diplomatic way, at his villa soon after his arrival. In the big, plaster hall of the villa I saw one of those huge chests which are often kept near the front door for coats, hats, sticks and those little silver plates of calling cards. Automatically, I dropped my hat and gloves on it, and was nearly knocked down in a concerted rush by two French majors who snatched my belongings

off the chest and handed them back to me with the glare of policemen who have caught someone desecrating a national shrine. 'That chest', they said, 'is for The General.' I looked, and sure enough there were the slim bamboo swagger-stick, the military hat with the two stars, reverently disposed, as on an altar, in the middle of that mammoth chest. That same night, Gaston Palewski, the suave, social chief of de Gaulle's personal staff since 1940 in London, was asked to dinner at our villa by my English colleague. Mlle. Nicole de Brignac, the same gallant ambulance driver who had kept our secret documents for us during the landings, was there. Palewski said to her: 'This is a great moment for me, so long an exile from France, to meet at last a real French woman, a *Parisienne*. And tell me, Mademoiselle, what do you think of us Gaullists? Do you look upon us as outsiders, as revolutionaries?'

She answered: 'No, not at all; although I must in all candour tell you that for me, as for most of the forty million French who didn't leave France or couldn't, there can be only one flag, the *tricolore*, and we don't want to see any cross, Hitler's or de Gaulle's, superimposed upon it. But do tell me,' she added, 'something about the man you call "your general".'

Palewski is a very sophisticated, cynical, very adroit Frenchman, with a long and well-known background in political and international intrigue. It was hard for us to believe our ears when he said, with a mystical, faraway look: 'For me, he is the greatest man I have ever known. Long before the war, when I was with Reynaud in the government, we saw in General de Gaulle the man of France's future. He has a strange power of reflecting in himself every thought, every feeling of every Frenchman. If you want to know what the humblest peasant in the most remote province of France is thinking, you have only to ask my General. He has a sort of magic contact with them. In fact, there is always beside him—even when he sleeps—a little casket filled with the soil of Lorraine. From this martyred soil of France a sort of emanation flows into his veins and gives him a mystic unity with the beating heart of France.' Coming from a different sort of man, this would have been rather moving, if eerie; coming from Palewski, it produced a complete silence in which someone changed the subject. We all wondered why Gaullism always dealt in this rather Wagnerian mysticism, instead of in Gallic realism with true French clarity.

I think the thing that instinctively frightened me about this *mystique* was the obvious fact that this sort of easy nationalist emotion and hero-worship is almost always associated with totalitarian ideas and ways. It was too close both to the old Norse-god nonsense of Hitler and the more traditional, but still dangerous, mystical nationalism of Pétain. The Pétainist motto—*Soyez Français, agissez Français, pensez Français*—was being taken over bodily by the Gaullists. The feeling of 'purification', the dedication to a leader, were there too. Gaullism even took over Pétain's (and Hitler's) interest in a 'youth movement'. Youth was malleable and could be stamped with the proper pattern. Youth was vigorous and could act. Several young Gaullist officers, in criticizing Giraud's sixty-odd years, told me that people over fifty were utterly useless in the world after the war.

De Gaulle's anti-British and anti-American feelings, which are now common knowledge, were obvious in Algiers at once. His close associates shared these feelings intensely. I remember Commandant Mangin, son of the great General, at lunch in Algiers one day. 'France would never support an Anglo-Saxon occupation,' he said to me, as we speculated about the final campaigns in Europe. 'But when we invade Europe,' I said, 'it would be as allies of France.' 'Are you our allies or aren't you?' he asked. I said I thought our early military support of de Gaulle and our attitude in North Africa proved that we were. 'Not at all,' he said, very politely, 'you come as occupants and nothing else.'

M. Clauzon, André Philip's assistant, said much the same thing to me. The French, he said, were so disgusted with the German occupation that they could never for a minute support the presence of an American or an Englishman in France. They had had enough of occupation, and had no need of us. 'Let's be practical,' I said, 'and admit that France needs us very badly just as we very much need France in Europe.' He told me with rising emotion that the French had no need of any Anglo-Saxons as they had their strong allies, the Russians. As he left, he told a mutual friend that he would never forget or forgive a phrase I had used—'let's be practical'.

It was easy to understand why many Gaullists, deeply humiliated by 1940 and by Vichy, should have such a dangerous and touchy brand of nationalism. Some of them, of course, remained remarkably free from it, but they were not in evidence at political headquarters. The General himself showed the most violent anti-American feeling of

all. From Morocco came word that he had told his cousins, the Maillots of Rabat, for instance, that he could have nothing to do with us or with Giraud because we had conspired together to give the United States the ports, railroads and mines of Morocco on a 99-year lease.\* This attractive story spread throughout Morocco where it caused a lot of unnecessary trouble for us. The North African atmosphere was perfect for whispering campaigns. They began with a fury and were almost all aimed directly or indirectly against the Americans. De Gaulle's own paper in London, *La Marseillaise*, was increasingly and virulently anti-American, so much so that the British Government finally, on 27 June 1943, had to suppress the paper. The New York Gaullist newspaper, *Pour La Victoire*, on 16 January 1943, had already refused to republish any more of its material.

This anti-Americanism was not only cultivated by Gaullists in Africa, England, North and South America but also in occupied France. An underground newspaper, *Bir Hakeim*, published a personal attack on President Roosevelt.† The Gaullists afterwards denied their responsibility for this under the usual pretext that this newspaper was not under their control.‡

De Gaulle's totalitarian methods also became evident very soon in Algeria. When Catroux succeeded Peyrouton as Governor General, one of his first acts was to deport Jean Rigault, who had given good, if unavailing, advice to Giraud and was still one of his close advisers. Rigault was given no reason for this action; secret police simply appeared at his house one night, and, without even giving him time to get in touch with the authorities or with his own friends, forced him into a car and drove him to Morocco. Murphy and the Americans generally were given no explanations, either, though it was well and widely known that Rigault was one of our pre-landing agents and our good friend. After a few days Murphy protested mildly a few times, to no avail, and there the matter ended. He considered this an affair among Frenchmen and took no firm steps. We already had a reputation all over North Africa for not standing by our friends (we had

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\* De Gaulle had apparently forgotten that four months before our entry into the war he offered the African ports to the Americans. See Appendix IX, p. 267

† See Appendix XXI, p. 309

‡ This paragraph did not appear in the American edition of 1945, as the article in question was only found after the liberation of France

allowed Béthouart, Magnan, and other friends to be attacked in Morocco) and this confirmed it.

I would have thought Rigault's expulsion had more moral fervour behind it if de Gaulle had not tolerated so many people of equally or even more spotty backgrounds. His only criterion, really, was total and complete obedience to de Gaulle. Colonel 'Passy', the chief of his secret police, whose real name was Dewavrin, had a Cagoulard record, longer and far blacker than Rigault's, and de Gaulle was equally receptive to the very Communist leaders who had done their best to undermine France's defence in 1940. It was ironic that Rigault, left to his fate by us, remained loyal to the end to the United States, as did Lemaigre-Dubreuil, also a reputed Cagoulard, who was forced out of Giraud's entourage in March 1943. (Both men were finally, after several arrests, released from prison in Paris in May 1945, as the only charge that could be brought against them was that they had been negotiating with a foreign power.)

A final twist on the Rigault affair was given me when I had a discussion with a British colleague about the de Gaulle official who had been mainly responsible for Rigault's being expelled from Algiers. 'General X. seems to me to use utterly totalitarian methods,' I said.

'Oh, you're quite wrong about him,' the Englishman replied seriously. 'He's all right. I know, because we have a secret agreement with him.' 'Secret?' I asked, 'from whom?' 'Oh, well, we pay him. He's a good man.' It was symptomatic of the utter confusion in Algiers at this point that my colleague, a man of integrity, could have thought a man's honesty was proven by the fact that he was operating as a French Government official while being paid by a foreign power. The episode left me wondering how many Gaullists had this ambiguous colour.

A previous episode that illustrated de Gaulle's totalitarian methods was the dismissal of Brunot, Governor of the Cameroons, who was ousted in a most high-handed manner after he had played a vital role in bringing the colony to the Gaullist side. A French parliamentary group which had been formed in London studied this case, decided it had dangerous implications, and wrote to Gaullist headquarters for an explanation. The only answer they got was from de Gaulle's Commissioner for the Colonies, René Pleven, who answered simply: 'No one has the right to criticize, or to have information, when it is a decision of the Leader.'

This hair-raising point of view was evident, too, in the later Gaullist treatment of the press. If I had not suspected before that he had essentially fascist tendencies, I would have known it from the typically fascist way in which the Gaullists at once began to handle the Algerian newspapers. There had been such a long German control through Vichy of the North African newspapers that everyone was avid for news. Yet when this Vichy control stopped, these newspapers seemed to remain paralysed for a while. The Giraud forces did not correct this as quickly or as energetically as they should; the Gaullists, however, showed more speed with increasing success for their side.

Monsieur Fouchet, for instance, a respected publisher who had been widely known, before our landings, for his pro-Allied, anti-German sentiments, published a paper called *La Revue Fontaine* in Algiers. Early in the summer of 1943, he received a visit from de Gaulle's press representative, M. Schumann (the radio voice of Free France from London). Schumann simply told Fouchet that in the future he 'would come under Gaullist direction'. Fouchet told Schumann that he had never been, and never would be, under anyone's direction, that he would continue to function as an independent journalist. 'Ah,' said M. Schumann, 'in that case, you will receive no paper. It is extremely difficult to publish a review with no paper.' This was only the beginning; by the spring of 1944 the entire press was under this sort of open and severe political censorship.

Long before this final dim-out of democracy in the colonies, de Gaulle's refusal to allow his own, special army to be merged with the bigger Giraud forces in North Africa—a decision he made at the first meeting of the Committee of Liberation—also sent a premonitory chill through many observers. Democratic leaders have no need of special, separate armies. They use the army of their country, not a *corps d'élite* of their own.

During all these hot June days in Algiers those of us deeply interested in the attempts being made to bring about French unity discussed nothing else. I remember one of many conversations I had with a British colleague.

'These Gaullists you have had with you all these years in London certainly dislike my country,' I said.

'Yes, they seem to,' he admitted, 'but it is because they don't know you. That will change.'

'I'm not so sure. In spite of all your kindness to them, they haven't been too generous in their co-operation with you.'

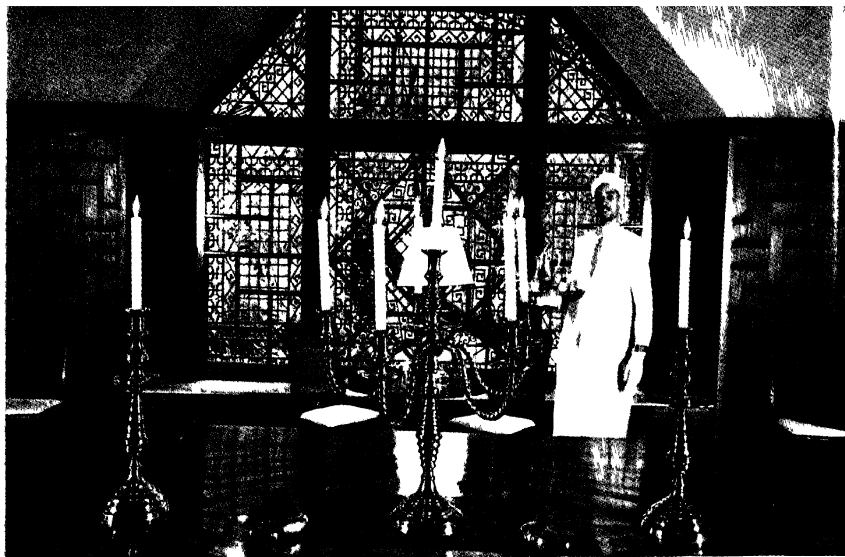
'But that is because their country was defeated and they're touchy,' he explained.

'I know, yet traditionally the French people like the United States better than England for the very simple reason that our interests have never conflicted. Why don't we both use this sympathy to build up a strong French-British-American friendship? We'll never let you down because our democratic interests lie together,' I said.

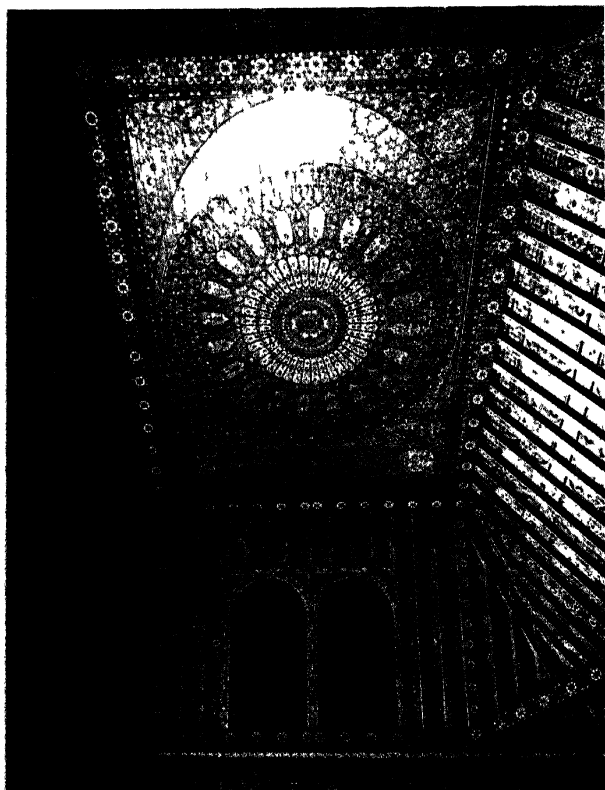
'All you say is true, but you must consider our position,' he replied. 'France is only a few miles across the Channel from us, and what guarantee have we that once the war is over your country won't become isolationist again?' It was just such conversations that showed me British fears during the trying period of the Committee's formation.

After its dark beginnings, the ill-starred French Committee of National Liberation went on its tortuous and politics-ridden way. De Gaulle, having won his initial stranglehold, was quiet and subdued; his followers were vociferous. Officially, the Committee from its beginning made several good moves. Noguès was finally removed on 4 June—an act that was long overdue. (He now lives in Paris and is still active on the Board of Directors of an important sugar company in Morocco.) The Committee declared war on Japan. As noted before, early statements emphasized the fact that France would be returned to her own duly constituted government as soon as liberation permitted. De Gaulle paid tribute to the action of the British and Americans in promoting French unity, and said it would help realize the greatness of France. He also spoke often of the 'laws of the Republic'.

But, during this same time, Gaullist propaganda split the French beyond hope of unity. It would be hard to convey the extent and ruthlessness of this propaganda to an American reader, used to a free press and unused to a coolly and deliberately planned campaign of lies and half-truths. Some of the propaganda, like the widely printed accusation that Giraud was actually pro-German, and that his escape from Königstein prison in Germany was a German-planned plot, reached this country and was repeated by Gaullists here. Some of it was so out of line that even the American Gaullist press, as noted above, began to stop printing it. But nothing was too virulent to be used, and believed, not only in North Africa but in England and the United States. Some of the men the Gaullists wildly accused of



The dining-room,  
where the author  
entertained  
Churchill and  
Roosevelt during  
the Casablanca  
Conference



The ceiling of the  
same room, one of  
the finest in Africa





Marrakesh from the tower of the villa



Mr Churchill's  
view of  
Marrakesh



Mr Churchill and President Roosevelt in the tower

## DE GAULLE CAPTURES NORTH AFRICA

Antoine de St Exupéry, the famous aviator and author, were in despair over the spectacle of two rival French Armies at a time when France herself was occupied by her most ruthless enemy.

By the time I left North Africa, in July 1943, the bitter comedy was well on the way to its climax. I returned to Washington via London, where I had a chance to fill in many mysterious gaps in the growth of Gaullism, and to get more glimpses of the tangle of power politics and strong-arm methods by which the leaders manipulated the brave, honest men among those who followed the banner of the Free French.

## To the Heart of Gaullism

On 9 July 1943, I left the new airport of Ras-el-Ma, next door to Fez, for Gibraltar and London. A delay of one day made me miss a plane connection in Gibraltar on my schedule. It was the ill-fated plane taking the great Polish mediator, General Sikorsky. I did not realize how near an escape I had had until, arriving in London, I read of my death in the London papers, and found the hotel room which friends had booked for me had been cancelled.

It was good to be in London, the capital of all resistance. The effect of being in a green, northern country, where English was the mother tongue, was indescribable after the exoticism of North Africa. I was anxious to make contact with England, London, and, above all, my English friends, to get their reaction to the whole French-Anglo-American drama which, by now, preoccupied me. I had left North Africa with a great many misgivings as to the future of British-French-American relations. I had been repeatedly assured that, basically, England and the United States were in complete agreement on a policy for dealing with the French, but, in spite of these assurances, I had seen far too much evidence in North Africa that, although on the highest level the overall policy was declared to be the same, the Foreign Office was producing another policy of its own. It looked very much to me as if they were firmly and permanently committed now to de Gaulle.

In London, the basic unsoundness of Gaullism became overwhelmingly evident. Here I gathered incontrovertible data on aspects of the Gaullist movement and of the man's personality that illuminated much that had seemed mysterious in North Africa. I learned more of his dictatorial and anti-democratic philosophy and technique, more of the dangerous tendencies of some of the men around him, more of the adroit way in which he managed to associate himself with Anglo-American liberal thought and, in the public mind, with the French liberals and the entire French resistance movement. And above

all I learned how the whole Gaullist issue had become an issue in internal British politics just at the moment when our British allies and we ourselves were preoccupied with more direct war issues—a fact that certainly helped Gaullism to win out over the better judgement of Anglo-American war leaders.

Right away I got in touch with two friends who had been deeply interested in the French problem since the very beginning of the war. One, Alastair Forbes, a British subject though American by birth, had been with General de Gaulle on the ill-fated expedition to Dakar. Since then ill health had forced him out of the Army and he had become associated with the *Observer*. From him, and from our Embassy, I learned of the famous Dufour case that was scheduled to come up shortly in London. This law suit was brought by a French exile, a former resistance worker with the British in France, against General de Gaulle himself and a group of his headquarters men. I have reproduced in an Appendix to this book a complete copy of the case as it was presented in King's Bench Court in London on 6 August 1943.\* The case was finally dropped by the plaintiff. I learned from a high-ranking American Naval officer, in liaison with the French in London, that this had been done after Dufour had received a very large sum of money from the Gaullist organization to withdraw the case. Many witnesses had originally offered their testimony on Dufour's side against de Gaulle and his associates, but had withdrawn these offers, I was told, after threats of reprisals against their families inside France. The whole tone of the evidence presented in this case was alarming, but no more so than many things I soon learned about the inner workings of Gaullism in London.

I there read with apprehension and misgivings two studies of General de Gaulle and his movement: 'The Truth about de Gaulle,'† by H. G. Wells, in *World Review*, and 'L'Idée Gaulliste'‡ in the *Economist*.§

What kept the English and American public behind de Gaulle was the impression of pure and patriotic fever still left from his early speeches, especially the one of 18 June 1940. Around this speech all the symbolism and mysticism of Gaullism had been built. But

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\* See Appendix XXII, p. 315

† See Appendix XXIII, p. 320

‡ See Appendix XXIV, p. 324

§ This paragraph is taken from the French edition

underneath the patriotic surface in London, as in North Africa, were very disturbing elements.

In Algiers I had heard Frenchmen arriving from England express many misgivings about de Gaulle's Carlton Gardens headquarters in London. They had said, 'Be careful of that group. They are a gang of Cagoulaards.' In London I confirmed this accusation. At the head of General de Gaulle's secret agents was the previously mentioned Colonel Dewavrin who went by the name of 'Passy'. (Many of these Cagoulaards in London took the names of Paris Métro stations. One of Passy's associates, for instance, called himself 'Bienvenu Martin'.) I had heard of these men in France in the middle thirties, when this fascist Cagoulaard organization was actively trying to overthrow democratic government in France, and I knew of their violence. I also knew that there had been a split within the Cagoule. Certain elements, believing that they should not weaken France by internal disputes just when a European war seemed imminent, had given up their activities. But the main section of the Cagoule had continued underground in all its fascist fervour. One of this latter group was Deloncle, to whom Colonel Passy had served as secretary. It was far from reassuring to find these elements again in London, grouped around a man striving behind a liberal façade for the political leadership of the greatest European democracy.

I already knew about the brilliant military record of the Gaullist Generals Koenig and Leclerc in North Africa: the heroic stand of the Fighting French troops under Koenig at Bir Hakeim was in the same tradition of greatness as de Gaulle's original resistance speech of 18 June 1940. It was in London, however, that I learned of the good work of the Gaullist Navy. The British were enthusiastic about the co-operation they had had from the 5,000 French sailors fighting the war at their side. I learned, however, that the English attributed this co-operation, not to de Gaulle, but to the efficient services of Admiral Muselier. I knew the Admiral had broken with General de Gaulle and I was curious to know what had caused the break. This was Admiral Muselier's story.

The trouble went back to Dakar. General de Gaulle had a great deal of explaining to do to the British, in the autumn of 1940, after the failure at Dakar. That expedition had been undertaken and backed by the British on the formal assurances of General de Gaulle that Dakar would rally to the Gaullist-English side. Not only did this

not happen, but there was good evidence, as I have noted before, that the defending forces at Dakar had been forewarned of the expedition. The British returned from this expedition, not with a sense of the bad faith of General de Gaulle, but certainly with a distinct sense of the inefficiency and the amateur character of the Gaullists as men of military action.

There was one outstanding Gaullist who had not been in favour of the Dakar expedition: Admiral Muselier. In December 1940 he was arrested for about a week by the English on the basis of a letter supposedly written by him to important people at Vichy, revealing military secrets. Muselier had always been extremely popular, not only with the French Navy but also with the British, because of his efficiency. At the same time he had often been in disagreement with de Gaulle, who never liked even a shade of difference or competition.

There was such a reaction against Muselier's arrest on the part of the French and Royal Navies and the British War Cabinet that a thorough investigation was made. The letter in question was found to be a forgery and was finally traced to the office of Colonel Passy. The man who actually executed the forgery was imprisoned on the Isle of Man and Muselier was released. This forgery could not be traced directly to de Gaulle or Passy, who denied knowledge of it, but there are many reasons to believe that it was done with their knowledge. The personal and dictatorial character of the Gaullist organization precludes the idea of a subordinate doing such a thing on his own. De Gaulle saw the letter in question, said nothing to Muselier, and transmitted it himself to the British Security people in order that they might take action. This in itself was most irregular, because if he believed Muselier had committed an act of treason it was certainly the duty of General de Gaulle as Commander-in-Chief of the Free French to take immediate action himself.

But all of this took place in the rushed, critical time of 1940. The British naval lines had to be kept going, so Muselier got on with his naval work, and became more and more the man in the Gaullist headquarters on whom the Admiralty depended. This co-operation between de Gaulle and Muselier lasted until December 1941 when the affair of St Pierre and Miquelon occurred.

Muselier set sail for Newfoundland and Canada to inspect French interests in that part of the world and to look into the question of suppressing the Vichy radio station on the Miquelon Islands. After

talks with the Canadian and American authorities at Ottawa, he realized that it would be unwise to take any immediate action as there was a plan being worked out whereby the Canadians would take control of this radio station. Muselier was further confirmed in this decision by a telegram from his chief of staff, Captain Moret (or Moulec as his real name was) in London:

'Informed by Foreign Office United States President formally opposed to operation planned.'

De Gaulle, on 18 December 1941, sent Muselier a telegram which became famous among the Allied authorities because it gave such a clear indication of the sort of co-operation de Gaulle was ready to give the Allies. Here is the text of the telegram:

'As requested, have consulted British and American Governments. We know from certain (?) that the Canadians intend themselves to (destroy) radio station at St Pierre. Therefore, I order you to carry out rallying of Miquelon Islands with means at your disposal and without saying anything to the foreigners. I assume complete responsibility of this operation which has become indispensable in order to keep France's possessions for her.'

At this point, Muselier was both a member of the Free French Committee at London and Commander-in-Chief of the Free French Naval Forces, which he had brought up from Gibraltar after the Armistice and turned over to the British, and which were finally incorporated into the Gaullist forces. Soon after his return from St Pierre and Miquelon, he resigned from the Committee of the Free French. As a French officer, he had felt forced to carry out the orders sent him by the Supreme Commander of the Free French Forces, but to show his disapproval of this order, he could—and did—resign his place as Commissioner of the Navy on the Committee.

De Gaulle promptly removed Muselier as Commander-in-Chief of the Navy. Muselier refused to accept this action, and was backed by all the French sailors in a bloc, as well as by many of the British naval authorities. He further maintained that it was only because of him that de Gaulle had any naval forces, and that de Gaulle therefore could not tamper with them.

Admiral Dickens of the Royal Navy made a complete investigation of the Muselier incidents, and of the methods generally used by de Gaulle with the French Navy. This report was seen by many prominent French people, as well as the English authorities, among them



Captain Moret, Muselier's chief of staff. In the report, the words 'violence', 'lies', and 'blackmail' were used in referring to the methods employed by de Gaulle. Moret described this report before a meeting of Free French Naval personnel. De Gaulle promptly protested to the Foreign Office that the British had no right to interfere thus in French affairs. Foreign Secretary Eden replied that the Foreign Office had 'received no communication of this report' from the British Admiralty. This, however, did not deny its existence.

In North Africa I had heard French officers recite, with a great deal of misgiving, the form of oath that had to be sworn before entering into the inner circles of Gaullism. In London, I found that this same sort of oath had caused many English authorities a great deal of concern.

A leading Frenchwoman in London heard, in June 1940, of the oath de Gaulle planned to have administered to potential agents. She tried in vain to have the terms modified. General Eon, in an open letter addressed in London to General de Gaulle,\* gave the text of the oath as follows: 'I swear to recognize General de Gaulle as sole legitimate chief of Frenchmen, and to engage myself in the work of making Frenchmen recognize him, by employing, if need be, methods and ways similar to those I would have used against the Germans.' The Secret Service in Algiers, at the beginning of 1943, gave me the same formula, ending with the words: 'I swear on my honour to obey the orders of the leaders who will be given me before, as well as after, the liberation.'

Another unpleasant sidelight on Gaullism was the Youth-Movement manner in which groups of young French people met in a Free French headquarters near London to study Gaullist principles. I read with some interest one of the key books used in these studies: *La Technique du Coup d'Etat*† by Curzio Malaparte, an Italian adventurer who was involved in almost every European revolution from 1917 on. In this book, a technical handbook rather than a theoretical study, Malaparte gives his analysis of the various techniques used in taking power.

That summer of 1943 London was buzzing with talk and rumour of

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\* See Appendix XI, p. 289

† American edition *Coup d'Etat, the Technique of Revolution*, E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, 1932

the French underground. This underground was never a single, unified movement, as it seemed over here, except that it was united psychologically, of course, against the German invaders. It was, rather, a series of different movements which often overlapped, and which were effective in different degrees on different levels. Our Embassy in London was, naturally, deeply interested in this whole chain of undergrounds. While we had had an Embassy in Vichy, it had kept in close contact with underground leaders. In those days the main underground had been grouped around the figures of General Weygand, General Rever, and General\* de Lattre de Tassigny, later Commander of French Occupation Forces in Germany. General Giraud, as soon as he escaped from the German prison at Königstein, had established contact with these men. In fact, his escape had been arranged by their agents.

When France fell, she had almost four million men mobilized. Under her armistice terms with the German conquerors she naturally had to demobilize this army, but a secret mobilization immediately started. Arms were hidden, and new ones made. There was a regular *état major* and command posts. The first contact of this military underground, of course, was with the British, as America was still neutral. Fairly regular services were established between England and France, by submarine and plane. There were even many air-fields so hidden that, by night, British planes could land men, make contact with the underground and bring them various supplies, though very few arms.

As time went on the military underground established contact with American representatives, too, and asked us to equip them with modern arms. This would have involved such risky operations as trying to debark secret shiploads of arms on the southern coast of France, and we never were willing to undertake it. (In North Africa, in the spring of 1942, I received a copy of a detailed plan for American military aid, as requested by this French underground. A more complete list had previously been given to Mr Murphy.) It was this military underground, with its highly organized and honest general staff, which planned and timed the sabotaging of transport, production and everything else. It was they who sent instructors to the many cells that carried out this work. The timing and spotting of these acts of resist-

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\* Later Marshal

ance had to be carefully considered so that the reprisals made by the Germans would not outweigh the value of the sabotage.

This military underground had very little faith in the Gaullist underground movement for three reasons: first, the latter was more a propaganda organization than a military one; there was no general staff; second, German agents were known to have infiltrated into the movement; and third, the Gaullists did very amateur things which ruined 'security'. They actually, for instance, broadcast data on specific acts of sabotage, loose talk which helped the Germans make reprisals.

At the moment of our landings in North Africa, as noted before, the leaders of this military underground had been led to expect simultaneous landings in the south of France. Generals Weygand, de Lattre de Tassigny and Rever waited in France to cover these landings. Had we been able to accomplish these—it is one of those sad 'might-have-beens' of history—the underground resistance of the Generals' 300,000 men would have at least allowed the French fleet to escape to North Africa. When the Germans moved into Unoccupied France it became increasingly difficult for this underground to act. They had shown their hand too much at the moment of our African landings. Both de Lattre de Tassigny and Rever later escaped from France, and General Weygand was promptly put in Giraud's old prison at Königsstein by the Germans.

There were two definite and rather tragic facts that resulted in the small role finally played by the original French Army of the underground. First, the French had deep-grained misgivings about the military efficiency of the British. They had a positive belief in American war potentiality, but also a mistrust of what they considered our inexperience, our easy attitude towards publicity, and our lack of security in the military sense. Exacerbating their doubts and inability to act was the ever-present fact of their being under German rule. They were defeated, and their enemy never let them forget it. France was isolated from our world, and completely preoccupied with her tragedy. The military underground therefore lost sight of the fundamental importance of constantly having close and serious contact with the English and Americans on the highest levels. This was a grave mistake on their part.

The other reason for this lack of confidence was certainly the fault of the Allies. We, too, had suspicions, and in the liberty and luxury of being unconquered overemphasized, I believe, our feeling that large

parts of France had somehow betrayed us. This feeling was certainly kept alive by Gaullist propaganda against the people remaining in France, and against the leaders of the army which had been defeated. Both facts resulted in the military underground never being taken seriously enough by the British or ourselves to receive the material aid in the form of armaments and supplies they desperately needed to fulfil their potential usefulness to our common cause.

This underground began on the very day of the armistice. As months and years passed, and the treachery of the Vichy Government became increasingly obvious, a staunch political underground began to take form, too. This was, alas, kept separate from the military underground because of the suspicion that always seems to exist, in the time of national tragedy, between civilian political forces and active military ones. This political underground found expression notably in the clandestine newspapers, *Combat*, *Libération*, and *Franc-Tireur*. Towards the end, when liberation was imminent, even Frenchmen who had never been in the original resistance movement joined the political-propaganda underground, accomplishing intermittent acts of sabotage, and making up the group known as the F.F.I. (French Forces of the Interior).

When Laval began to send French workers into Germany by force in 1942, the so-called *maquis* began to form. People anxious to avoid deportation or forced labour for the Germans simply left their homes and lived in more or less organized bands in the forests or mountains, or were hidden singly or in small groups by farmers in remote parts of the country. This *maquis* group served as a manpower 'pool' for all three different branches of the underground resistance.

An increasingly important element in the French underground was the Communist party. When Hitler invaded Russia on 22 June 1941, they began to work with the military underground. After 1942, they became a more or less separate 'resistance', directed politically by the Communist party and in touch with Russian agents, particularly in the south of France. At the time de Gaulle took over in Algiers, he made overtures to the Communists because he knew the growing political force they represented within France. The Communists, in turn, rallied to de Gaulle because, particularly in the case of the Communist deputies released from prison in North Africa after our landings, they needed whitewashing with the many French people who couldn't forget Communist responsibility in 1940 in the defeat of France.

It was during my stay in London that I learned these intricacies of the French underground from one of its original leaders, a contact of our former Embassy in Vichy, André Girard (known as 'Carte' in the Underground). He explained the way in which the underground kept contact with the outside world. I have since confirmed his facts, which have never been published, with my own experience, our Embassy in London, our services in Washington, and British colleagues. But the real importance of Girard's story is the way in which it illustrates the conflict between American policy with France and that of the Foreign Office in the spring and summer of 1943.

Until the spring of 1943 the French underground contacts with the British were kept distinct and separate from the Gaullist group in London. This was done on strict and repeated orders from the British authorities. They had already had so much trouble with the Gaullists that they preferred to work directly with the French in France. British secret radio stations communicated directly with the command posts of the underground in France. The liaison officers sent by the British military services into France acted on overall directions from the Foreign Office. The Frenchmen who went to London were, also, in contact with the Foreign Office on political matters. None of these contacts passed through the Gaullist headquarters in Carlton Gardens. This was one of the things that exacerbated de Gaulle's hatred of the British.

One of the heads of the French Military Intelligence Bureau connected with the underground Army at this time was the celebrated Colonel Vautrin. He had left early in 1943 and gone to London by the secret transportation route maintained throughout the war between France and England. This trip was made on British invitation to try to get more arms and closer military co-operation with them. He left behind, as his deputy, Girard. One day Girard received a message, over the clandestine radio from London, asking him to come to London as soon as possible. The message read, 'Colonel Vautrin finds himself in a delicate situation here because of your absence and therefore asks you as a personal service to come to England.' Girard arrived in England by plane only to find Vautrin had left for Africa the very night Girard arrived. Girard thought it strange that the Colonel who had sent him his orders should not have waited to see him. On this African trip, Vautrin was killed 'under circumstances,' as Girard wrote, 'that still make me wonder.'

In London, Girard was in contact with the English officers with whom he had worked in the military underground. He asked them to put him in touch with the American representatives in London interested in his underground problems. He was told by these officers that there were no such Americans. It was by sheer chance that he finally established contact with men in our Embassy who were far from disinterested, and who had, as a matter of fact, been hoping and trying to get in touch with high-ranking members of the military underground with which they had worked back in the Vichy days, some months before. The Foreign Office had just decided to channel all underground contacts through de Gaulle's headquarters, believing he was their best means of strengthening Anglo-French relations. This was not American policy. Again, as so often, there was a conflict of services and of policies, well illustrated while I was in London in the case of André Girard.

When Girard had first come out of France, he had been given the job of running the secret English radio that communicated with the command posts of the underground in France. This radio station was called *Radio Patrie* and had been established by the British in the middle of September 1942, upon Girard's request. It was used to send orders by code to all the 'cells' in the military underground throughout France, and was of vital importance in the organization and synchronization of their resistance work.

On 15 April 1943 Girard was suddenly told that this radio was henceforth to be run from Gaullist headquarters. Girard, not being a Gaullist, could no longer speak to France over *Radio Patrie*. As a French resistance worker he could not take Gaullist resistance seriously, and as a Frenchman he could not be a part of their anti-Anglo-American attitude and aspirations for political supremacy in France. In England he had seen enough of the Gaullists to have his original ideas on Gaullism strongly reinforced. This action with *Radio Patrie*, of course, was part of the British Foreign Office's plan to back de Gaulle completely. From the planning of our African landings up until this time the official British policy had been to encourage, in fact to insist upon, the incorporating of the lesser forces of General de Gaulle into the greater armed forces of North Africa, and to work with the military underground. Until the victory in Tunisia the military aspect of the whole French question took precedence with both the British and American Governments. With African victory,

however, the Foreign Office began to be preoccupied again with the political future of Europe generally and their position with France and Russia in particular.

The American Embassy, which was, of course, following American policy, took more interest in the more immediate military problems facing France and arranged to have Girard go to North Africa to continue his work with the French secret army through the Intelligence Bureau of the North African Army. An American officer, in London, working closely with the British secret services, heard of Girard's plans and mentioned them to his British colleagues. Here the conflict of British and American policy suddenly came into full view. Girard, having his exit visa from the Home Office, was stopped at the airfield by orders from the S.O.E. (British military secret services) the moment he was about to leave for Algiers.

This action coincided with the turbulent moment I described in Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen of the attempt in Algiers to fuse the Giraud and de Gaulle elements into The French Committee of National Liberation. André Girard was awaited impatiently by the Giraud elements in North Africa. He was their contact with the military underground that General Giraud had left behind in France. The Foreign Office, however, did not want this. Any close tie up with the French underground would be too great a political card for the rival. They were backing de Gaulle. Girard's failure to reach Algiers helped enormously to give the de Gaulle forces there the necessary time to win.

Later, upon demand from the State Department, Girard was given his exit visa from England by the Foreign Office after they let it be understood by word and letter how strongly they held to their principle that Girard should never be allowed to go to North Africa or speak to France over the radio. In the meantime British agents went to France and told the clandestine radio stations that they were sent by 'Carte' or André Girard. Since he could never deny this over the air there was no way for his Radio Patrie stations to know it was untrue. Girard, by this time, was anathema to all Gaullists and some British (they said he represented a 'reactionary, fascist-tinged army group'). In spite of this, he remains a pro-English and pro-American Frenchman who preserved (and preserves) the respect of leading Americans concerned with our French relations. One of them said to me after the liberation of France, 'It is now obvious Girard was consistently right;

if we had only gone on working through him our French relations would certainly now be better.'

From this time on we allowed the Foreign Office and the Gaullist services to remain in full charge of the underground lines with France. By an agreement dated July 1943, our American services worked only through British lines. This was understandable, in view of the fact that the British had had these lines long before we were in the war, but it meant the sacrifice, again, of the original American policy of keeping any one political group from taking over the political control of France while she was helpless. It also meant that our Anglo-American contact with the underground became much more political than military, due to de Gaulle's constantly greater emphasis on political questions than on military ones. (The feeble part played by the returning French Army in the early days of liberation was the result of this policy.) Moreover the channelling of our service through British Gaullist lines definitely meant that a powerful organ of anti-American propaganda was allowed to establish itself in pro-American France. But, as I point out later on, the real tragedy of all these manipulations was that they eventually worked against British interests, too.\*

In London I also learned that a year before all these events, de Gaulle had established, in the summer of 1942, another set of contacts with another French underground—the political, propaganda one. Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie (brother of Henri d'Astier we worked with in North Africa) had gone to England from France that same summer, using secret routes of the military underground. A journalist and politician, he at that time headed a group of about forty resistance men who ran a clandestine newspaper called *Libération*.

In London, he made contact with General de Gaulle, and found that the British were still entirely concentrated on the military underground and not much interested in a political one. It was he who convinced de Gaulle that propaganda in the clandestine French press could have great political weight. De Gaulle issued a statement, at the time, that he had had a long conference with a 'great leader of the underground in France'. D'Astier de la Vigerie returned to France

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\* It was some time after this that the British began to make French paper money, to be sent into France by the Gaullist underground. But before the English would print these bills they insisted on there being some guarantee for this money. Finally the Banque Rothschild underwrote this issue for the Gaullists



with financial backing in the form of millions of francs from de Gaulle. From then on, Gaullism was quickly taken up by all of the clandestine presses in France. The three leading ones, *Combat*, *Libération*, and *Franc-Tireur* published the Proclamation of General de Gaulle of 24 June 1942.\* This proved to be one of de Gaulle's most astute moves towards his desire for political domination in France. Ironically, d'Astier de la Vigerie's paper, *Libération*, is today one of the voices of the opposition to de Gaulle in France.

It was during this same summer of 1943 that I again saw General Odic, who had first been in North Africa with Weygand and later had returned to work with Giraud. I knew Odic's anti-German, anti-collaboration reputation, and that he had left North Africa in the autumn of 1941 for the United States. But the thing that most interested me at this time about him was that though he had early made contact with de Gaulle, he had not joined the Gaullist movement. I wondered why. He gave me the statement which follows, more or less in his own words:

When I associated myself with the French resistance, my declaration was widely circulated over the radio by the Gaullist propaganda department. In it I reviled the servility and expressed my horror at the feebleness of the Vichy Government in the face of the mass executions of innocent hostages. I explained the open war I had now undertaken against Germany, following the appeal of General de Gaulle.

On my way to England, I received a personal telegram of thanks from General de Gaulle. When I landed from the bomber in which I travelled, a plane was waiting to take me directly to London.

I arrived on 12 December 1941, and was taken at once to Carlton Gardens, where General de Gaulle was awaiting me. My reception, the embrace, the photographers in evidence, everything marked a desire to woo me, politically. I had already met General de Gaulle four years previously at Metz, but I did not remember him. I did, however, accord him the merit of being the symbolic representative of French resistance against the enemy. He was, to me, the ambassador and the voice of a France which was speechless. However, his first words displeased me.

'I give you,' he said to me at once, 'the supreme command of my land, sea and air troops in Africa, stationed at Brazzaville.'

I was astonished by this abrupt beginning, which seemed to intimate a form of payment for my allegiance. (I learned later of long bickerings

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\* See Appendix XXV, p. 328

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

which had preceded the appointments of other adherents, and I suppose that these may perhaps have influenced his interview with me.) My gesture had been spontaneous, without conditions, dictated by a patriotic obligation, and I wished it to have this character. Besides, having already been in command of an army during the war, and being Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, I had not come to London to be given a title. My idea was more modest in form, and more ambitious in fact, than the ridicule of becoming a Commander without troops, in a fictitious theatre of operations.

I reminded General de Gaulle that the reason I had come to London was to try to prevent a Franco-German alliance which Vichy seemed about to accept. De Gaulle replied in these exact words:

‘On the contrary, France must be in the war by the side of Germany to be able to prove the guilt of the men of Vichy.’

If I had been shocked by his first remark, I was horrified by the second. Where was I? Had I really heard correctly? Like a flash the mist cleared, and I realized that at Carlton Gardens the war was being fought not against Germany, but against Vichy.

I have no fondness for Vichy. As well as any Frenchman, I know those guilty there, and I take it for granted that French justice, in its good time, will decree the rightful punishment. For myself, I had fought Vichy when its policy was one of abdication to the enemy. But, I always encouraged it, each time, when I felt that it followed the will of the people to further resistance.

To be frank, Gaullism as such is epitomized in the reply of its founder. His cynicism is the essence of it. Realizing this, one understands how it was born, how it evolved, and the end to which it aspires. The whole French problem, as seen by de Gaulle, is brought down to the level of opposition to any possible political rival. It involves the systematic destruction of French unity.

Meditating on these bitter thoughts, I walked back to the hotel where I passed the four months of my stay in London. It had been decided that I should make contacts with different members of the London Committee before having my second interview with General de Gaulle.

With the exception of the Service of Naval Affairs, the impression I received did not lessen my initial amazement. For fifteen years, I had worked in various ministries in Paris, and I could, therefore, judge how completely artificial this London organization was. It reminded one of the trappings of a theatre, in which the actors waited for the photographers and the publicity agent. At the entrance one was offered portraits of the heroes with explanatory notes.

Too often, these heroes had forgotten to fight at the moment of battle, and had become merely oral soldiers. Too many of them found in Gaullism

a remunerative occupation which ended their enforced idleness. Some in uniform passed as heroes who had conspicuously gone into hiding during the storm. Not one name comes to my mind belonging to anyone who represented French public opinion. It was evident that people of consequence would not submit to the rules of Carlton Gardens. Decisions were taken by General de Gaulle, and countersigned by a Commissioner who might not even belong to the Department concerned. Such methods eliminated all responsibility, and permitted the development of dictatorship.

When, three days after our first meeting, General de Gaulle asked for my opinion, I did not hide my feelings.

'From a French point of view, all this means nothing,' I said to him.

'It is not my fault if the leaders have not followed me,' he replied. I was not yet in a position to judge the value of this answer.

During the following weeks the matter was made clear to me by independent Frenchmen in London. I soon noted that there were many of these who either kept themselves apart from the Gaullist movement, or were openly hostile to it. I learned that, from the beginning, it had appeared to them to be more of a political faction than a military assembly. These men had no sympathy for Vichy, and did not hide their admiration for England. One of them, who bore a well-known name in France, had given up his position there, but had not joined the Gaullist movement. A number of French officers who desired to continue the war against Germany preferred renouncing their rank, and joining the British Army as lieutenants, rather than receiving higher ranks plus English pay among the Gaullist troops.

The opinion of these Frenchmen was that, far from having tried to enlist the sympathy and allegiance of well-known Frenchmen, de Gaulle had systematically avoided them.

I, nevertheless, gave General de Gaulle all the information I could concerning France. During a subsequent conversation with him, I broached the question of France's political future. Without ignoring the importance of the military side of the resistance, I observed that, because of the dictatorship introduced by Vichy, one must consider the conditions under which the country could revert once more to Republican institutions.

'Do you still believe in those things?' de Gaulle asked me. I believed in them decidedly, and I shall always believe in them. It will not be sufficient for France to find military freedom unless she can, also, attain her independence, and her place in the democracies of the world.

I had not wanted to form my opinion of Gaullism following the first conversation which I had had with its chief, but I was progressively led to the confirmation of my original opinion. Vichy and Carlton Gardens

seemed to me to be more and more alike. National Revolution and Gaullism advertised the same methods, and voiced the same intentions; two rivals, each playing the game of chance best suited to their own advancement.

During the whole month of January 1942 I did not once go back to Carlton Gardens. My mind was made up, but I wanted to compare my conclusions with those formed by others who had been eighteen months in London. I met the English, the French, and the Gaullists. Among these last, a few became confidential. They confessed to having made a mistake, and asked what they should do. To all those in uniform who were doing useful work, either as combatants, or in training combatants, I said: 'Close your eyes, and go on with your work.' Thanks to them, France continued to figure in the war.

It was, however, necessary for the leaders to take a position, and I had decided not to remain under Gaullism. At first I thought it better not to reveal the facts related above. But I realized that France would gain nothing by identifying herself with a movement whose mistakes and defects were already known in well-informed circles.

'It seems to me to be unbelievable,' I said to de Gaulle, finally, 'that anyone should try to cultivate the hatred of French against French. There are not many who are guilty, and they must be punished, but that must not constitute a system. French political life is based on something else. I know the feelings of the authorities in North Africa. They are not collaborationists, or, in any case, they are not so today. It is essential to get in contact with them and, without compromising them, prepare them for their eventual reunion with us. If the bridge which separates us is widened, time will increase the breach, instead of healing it.'

*'As this is the way you think,' said de Gaulle, 'you had better go back to North Africa, and I shall fight you.'*

I informed the British Government that honour forbade my becoming associated with the movement which I had unmasked, in the same manner in which it had prevented my remaining with the Government of Vichy. Not only had I met people in London who confirmed my impressions, but I was the witness of events which reinforced them.

The words spoken by de Gaulle are not without importance, because they attest to the personal responsibility he has for acts one attributes to his entourage. The acts themselves are, however, of more importance because they cannot be denied.

This 1941-2 experience of General Odic's tragically confirmed the suspicions I had already had in Africa of the good intentions of General de Gaulle. I felt more and more that President Roosevelt's

firm stand against de Gaulle's political ambitions was well grounded. It had always been the declared American policy to aid in every way those people who wished to take up arms and fight our common enemy, but this could not be stretched to mean that we would aid in every way factions who definitely wished to take over political power with no mandate under democratic forms. Our first objective, in our French policy, was military victory, and I realized beyond a doubt that the President was right in keeping it our first objective. The second objective was that of trusteeship—of guarding the sovereignty of France for the French people.

Early in the summer of 1943 President Roosevelt and Mr Churchill seemed agreed on the danger of de Gaulle's political ambitions, both to our military ventures and to our relations with France. At that time Mr Churchill sent a report to the American Government, a summary of which Ernest Lindley published in the American press.\* It is of such importance in an understanding of British-American relations with France that I reprint the essence of this article:

The hypothesis that it is American influence that is being brought to bear to persuade the British government to modify its attitude towards General de Gaulle is destroyed by the high points of a statement of British policy on this question recently sent to this country, and understood to be the views of the Prime Minister.

1. De Gaulle can no longer be considered a reliable friend of Britain. In spite of all that he owes to British assistance and support, he has left a 'trail of Anglophobia' wherever he has been.

2. From August 1941 on, he has tried to play Great Britain against the United States and the United States against Britain.†

3. He has striven to create friction between the British and French in Syria.

4. He clearly has 'Fascist and dictatorial tendencies'.

5. In spite of these grounds for complaint, the British government has treated de Gaulle fairly and recognizes the value his name has come to have in France—chiefly through British publicity. It still hopes that he will co-operate loyally as co-President of the new French National Committee of Liberation. So far, however, he has struggled for complete mastery.

6. Peace and order and smooth communications in the French North

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\* See Appendix XXVI, p. 331

† See Appendix IX, p. 267

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

African territory are essential to the great military operations now being prepared. (The statement was written before the invasion of Sicily.) Likewise it is highly important to avoid throwing into turmoil the French forces which the United States is now arming.

This statement was especially important because de Gaulle's very political existence was due to the Prime Minister and the British Government. It was impossible for President Roosevelt to take unilateral action against him. If political Gaullism was to be eliminated as a menace to France and her Allies, it was the Prime Minister who would have to act. He had made de Gaulle, and he would have to break him.

The repercussions from the Churchill report were especially serious in England.\* Gaullist propaganda had great weight there, and, even more importantly, political opposition to Mr Churchill was being born within his own party. In that summer of 1943 I often heard English men and women of his own political affiliations say: 'He has been a magnificent war leader, but he is not a man with whom we can make the peace.' His anti-de-Gaulle feelings confirmed liberal belief that he could not be trusted in foreign affairs. The Foreign Office also opposed Mr Churchill on de Gaulle, considering, and with good reason, that its own policy with de Gaulle was bearing fruit. British prestige was growing every day in North Africa, but American prestige was sinking rapidly. In France, attacks were being made on American ideas and even on the personality of the President by the clandestine Gaullist press.

The Prime Minister knew Mr Roosevelt's strong views on the French problem and his determination to hold to them. This knowledge had unquestionably influenced his anti-de-Gaulle report. Some sections of English opinion began to feel that their Prime Minister was too much under the influence of the American President, just as in this country certain elements began to think the contrary was true. At the same time the fact that American prestige which had been so high in November of 1942, at the time of our landing in North Africa, could fall so rapidly, in spite of American aid to the French, presented real political issues to be handled by the Foreign Office and the State Department. These unfortunately were grounds for friction.

In England I endeavoured to inform myself on the over-all lines of

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\* See Appendices XXVII, p. 334, and XXVIII, p. 335

Foreign Office policy in this increasing French dilemma. It must be understood to follow the rest of our defeat with de Gaulle. I had had impressions of its aims in Algiers but in England they appeared clearer. The Foreign Office's primary desire was to strengthen British relations with France. In addition to her proximity as a neighbour, France was most useful as a balance against the growing power of the Russian colossus on the Continent. England's leadership in French relations was as important to her as we consider our leadership in Pan American relations. In de Gaulle they felt at once that they had someone who would prove a 'good neighbour' and who could also help balance the European scales in Britain's favour. De Gaulle had spasmodically flirted with Russia, it was true, but he was essentially, as the Foreign Office knew, conservative and inclined towards the pre-revolutionary French Catholic state. Their unpleasant experience with his temper and lack of balance actually made it tempting to the average bureaucrat, once this policy was in force, to give in to him on detail. A series of small resultant compromises then made de Gaulle's victory much easier.

Mr Churchill was vigorously attacked in the House of Commons on 22 July for his report against de Gaulle.\* In the attack, his opponents first seemed to think the article that had appeared in the American press was erroneous, but Mr Churchill directly and clearly stated: 'I take full responsibility for this document, the text of which was drafted personally by me. It is confidential document. I am not prepared to discuss it otherwise than in secret session, and then only if there were a general desire from the House to have a secret session.'†

The Prime Minister's point of view was obviously not shared by the majority of either his cabinet or his fellow members of Parliament.

\* See Appendix XXVIII, p. 335

† Mr Churchill's mistrust of de Gaulle had been building up for some time. It was first expressed in the House of Commons on 10 December 1942, in the famous secret speech on Admiral Darlan, explaining the much-criticized American 'deal' with him in Algiers

When this speech was first published in the United States by *Life* in 1946, and later in London by Cassell, the part of the speech dealing with de Gaulle was omitted. A paraphrase of the missing part will be found in the footnote to Appendix X on p. 286

However, Mr Churchill's Foreign Secretary, Mr Eden, did not agree with the Prime Minister's mistrust of de Gaulle—a mistrust shared by the Americans—so profound that it was then believed that Mr Churchill wanted to liquidate his arrangements with de Gaulle. (See footnote to Appendix X, p. 286)

The de Gaulle issue had been thrown into internal British politics. The Prime Minister had two choices—either to acquiesce before his Foreign Office and the pro-de-Gaulle majority or to fight for his point of view in Parliament, using all of his powers of persuasion and his great prestige. To do this, he would have had to reveal, not only to the members of Parliament but, eventually, to the British public, the large amount of evidence he had against de Gaulle and Gaullism. (In the spring of 1943 the Prime Minister had already been asked by an important Englishman to publish a 'white paper' of all the detailed relations between the British Government and de Gaulle. This Englishman feared the effects of Gaullism on French relations as well as on Anglo-American relations if its evils continued to be hidden. Mr Churchill thought such revelations then unwise.)

This was the summer of 1943. The war was far from won. It was not until almost a year later that we even dared to attack the coasts of France. The British people and Government, since June 1940, had generously and in all good faith backed General de Gaulle and his movement. If, three years later, the Prime Minister had intended to liquidate him, there would have been a great deal of explaining to do. Mr Churchill apparently decided to let de Gaulle win.



## The Policy of Appeasement

The history of our dealings with de Gaulle from then on is the story of people who have lost their footing on a slope and find themselves falling helplessly downhill. We had slipped in North Africa and we were never able to retrieve our errors. We had lost command of the situation.

When I got back to Washington I found the makers of our foreign policy bitterly aware that we were fumbling our handling of the French problem. Important elements in the State Department, not yet sure where we had gone wrong but horrified by our falling prestige, wanted to recognize de Gaulle at once. They felt that to delay recognition was simply to martyrize him. Working almost frantically under a barrage of unfavourable publicity, and improvising almost from day to day, the State Department tried to reconcile this rather fatalistic feeling about de Gaulle with the President's original French policy. Mr Roosevelt still held to this, and did his best to implement it that summer of 1943.

A final attempt to buoy up the sinking figure of General Giraud, and with it our hopes of restoring French military effectiveness, came that summer. Giraud visited the United States. The visit, unfortunately, came too late. When the General emerged from his long, careful talks with the President, he said to members of his *entourage*, 'Why was I never told in Algiers how strongly the President desired to help us rebuild our armies? All would have been different had I realized that the President felt as strongly as he does.'

The realization was a belated one. In August 1943 Mr Churchill met the President at the Quebec Conference. At that conference we were finally committed to a policy of appeasement with de Gaulle.\* I

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\* According to Robert E. Sherwood's *Roosevelt and Hopkins—An Intimate History* (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1948) one of the results of the Quebec Conference was 'an agreement to disagree on extending recognition to

was told in Washington that the Prime Minister explained to the President that, because of the political situation at home, he would have to give in to the pro-Gaullist faction in Britain. He had a majority of both the House and the Cabinet against him. The President, rightly feeling that Anglo-French policies must coincide in view of the plans for a second front, reluctantly yielded. On 26 August 1943, we gave the de-Gaulle-dominated Committee partial recognition.\*

The Committee, with its two chairmen, General de Gaulle and General Giraud, were to be the trustees of all French interests, and the authority in the liberated parts of the empire. (Russia recognized the Committee more fully as 'representing the interests of the French State' on the same day.) This partial recognition on the part of the United States and Great Britain was not a compromise. It was only the fulfilment of what General de Gaulle had originally demanded in the Brazzaville declaration of organic Gaullism in 1940.† From then on, however, the story of our relations with de Gaulle became one of constant appeasement on our part and of growing but helpless disillusionment in London and Washington.

By the time of Giraud's Washington visit, however, de Gaulle's political domination of the French Committee of National Liberation was already complete. Giraud still had control of the Army, but de Gaulle had no intention of letting him keep it. He used the same ruthless weapons in taking over the army that he had used in the battle for political domination of the Committee of Liberation. When Giraud returned to North Africa he found the Army had been exposed to still more Gaullist pressure. It was obvious, with all this fratricidal intrigue going on in the hot oriental atmosphere of French North Africa, that American arming of French troops had to slow up—if not stop entirely. We could not afford to expose the Allied supply lines running from England and America through North Africa.

When Giraud returned from Washington he threw himself into war preparations. De Gaulle concentrated, as usual, on politics. At the end of September 1943, after the Corsican campaign, which was the only

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\* See Appendix XXIX, p. 336

† See Appendix V, p. 254

the French Committee of National Liberation in Algiers which, by now, was under the domination of de Gaulle'. This was the President's last effort to hold to his policy of recognizing no one element before the French people could choose its own government

purely French campaign from North Africa, de Gaulle and Giraud again met head on. Corsica was the first French soil to be liberated. After this had been accomplished, General Giraud, as Commander-in-Chief of the French Army, visited the scene of victory. He was hailed enthusiastically by the Corsicans with shouts of '*Vive Giraud, Vive la France*,' as he made his tour around the island. But Giraud remembered that he was not only Commander-in-Chief of the French Forces, but Co-Chairman of the French Committee of National Liberation. He stopped his car at once, and explained that there should be no more '*Vive Girauds*.' '*Vive la France*,' yes; but he, General Giraud, was but a colleague of General de Gaulle's. There must also be '*Vive de Gaulles*' if there were to be '*Vive Girauds*.'

Then, in his political role as Co-Chairman, and following the agreements that had been made with de Gaulle, Giraud invoked the Tréveneuc Law of 1872\* for the reconstitution of democratic processes. He appointed the General Councillors who had been disbanded when Pétain took control in 1940, empowered them to take over the administration of the island and to name the people who were to co-operate with the Committee at Algiers.

When de Gaulle heard this, he flew into one of his now notorious rages. '*Vous avez volé ma Corse*,' he cried to Giraud. 'You have stolen my Corsica.' He repudiated any idea of using the constitutional procedures he had twice promised to follow. He then had his own Algiers Committee hand-pick the local *Préfets* who were to administer Corsica.

But de Gaulle now fully realized, from Giraud's popularity in Corsica, that the old General remained an effective, if unwitting, political rival. So he began building up his Committee, to give it the appearance to the world of a fully-fledged Provisional Government for France. His first act was to form, and progressively enlarge, what was known as a 'Consultative Assembly' to act as an advisory body to the Committee itself. The members for this assembly were appointed, in many instances, by General de Gaulle himself, from Frenchmen all over the world. Certain French parliamentarians in exile were called to Algiers to serve on this assembly. Other places were filled by men brought out from France as 'representatives of resistance groups'. Among the parliamentarians used were some Communist deputies,

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\* See Appendix VI, p. 259

the same Communist deputies who had been arrested at the outbreak of the war in 1939 because of their anti-war party 'line'. An evaluation of this assembly and its eventual work in redrafting the French Constitution is well given by E. B. Wareing in the *Daily Telegraph*.\*

Some parliamentarians in exile refused to serve on the Consultative Assembly because the Assembly had no power except an advisory one. They did not wish to lend themselves to what was called a representative legislative body, when it actually was not. Of the five exiles invited from the United States, four refused to go. Their point of view is clearly expressed in an open letter written by Henri de Kerillis, whom I have mentioned before, to Félix Gouin, President of the Consultative Assembly.† They felt as American Congressmen might, if, while America was under Japanese occupation, some patriotic but self-appointed West Point graduate set up an official American government in Puerto Rico.

On 6 November 1943, the Algiers Committee, using the excuse that the leader of the French Army could not also hold a political office, voted Giraud off the Committee. (Some members of the Consultative Assembly protested this vigorously.) M. André Le Trocquer was made Commissioner for War and Air and from then on Giraud was told that he was under Le Trocquer's orders. Opposition to this new military set-up began in the ranks of the North African army. Le Trocquer, asserting his new authority, confined several high-ranking officers to their quarters.

The method used in ousting Giraud was a typical one already employed several times by the Gaullist faction, and used even more often in succeeding months. The authority cited for the action was Article Four of a decree dated 2 October 1943, providing that should a member of the Committee assume 'the effective control of the Armed Forces' he would cease functioning as a member of the Committee. The action taken against General Giraud was cited as 'foreseen' in the decree of the preceding month to which, at that time, no one had paid any attention. In fact, General Giraud himself had signed the decree that was to remove him from his Co-Chairmanship of the Committee, and was then called upon to reconsider the formula by which he had ousted himself.

London and Washington were concerned over this reshuffle in

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\* See Appendix XXX, p. 338

† See Appendix XXXI, p. 343

Algiers because, first, they were afraid it might prevent French participation in the Allied war effort and, second, they foresaw that it might hamper a future free choice of government by the French people. The Anglo-American attitude was summed up by Mr Churchill in a Churchillian phrase: 'The French National Committee are not the owners, but the trustees, of the title deeds of France.'

During this period General Giraud threatened several times to resign as Commander-in-Chief of the French Forces, but the Anglo-American authorities urged him not to. On this point, the American diplomats might have been firmer in advising Giraud. It would have been more effective to resign than to give in to this shameless political pressure. Although we no longer spoke with our former authority in North Africa, we still had power enough to prevent this injustice to the leader of the armies who had fought so gallantly at our side in Tunisia.

The ever-combustible Near East next exploded in our faces. When the Free French forces took over in Syria in 1941, General Catroux, speaking for General de Gaulle, told Syria and the Lebanese States that de Gaulle accepted the principle of the termination of French mandatory rights in these countries. During the war, however, it was agreed that French authority would be maintained there under the leadership of the Gaullist Committee.

In November, 1943 Nationalist elements in the Lebanese Government became restive under French domination. De Gaulle impetuously ordered the French Delegate General in the Levant, M. Jean Helleu,\* to arrest the protesting politicians. This action caused so much excitement throughout the whole Middle East, with demonstrations of sympathy as far away as Cairo, that all Islam seemed likely to catch fire.

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\* Lady Spears (Mary Borden) in her book *Journey Down a Blind Alley*, published by Harper and Brothers, New York, 1946, gives an eye-witness description of these events, as her husband was British Minister to the Middle East, living in Beirut.

'Monsieur Helleu had received his instructions and had made a sad mess of trying to carry them out, but the fact that he was acting on instructions received was clear. Though an effort was made by Algiers later to disclaim responsibility there was little doubt as to where the responsibility lay. Indeed the miserable little man on the spot had made great play on the eleventh with a telegram approving his conduct from General de Gaulle, he waved it before the eyes of the press like a banner'

London and Washington both protested to the French Committee, and demanded the release of the Lebanese leaders. Catroux, with some charged words implying British connivance in the whole affair, because of the long-standing Anglo-French rivalry in the Middle East, went to Beirut to settle this incident.

The fact that we had had to intervene in this affair was a grave blow to French prestige in the Islamic world. The repercussions were felt across the whole face of Islam through North Africa to the Moroccan coast. General de Gaulle, in an effort to court favour in the Arab world, then put through a decree offering full French citizenship to 'several tens of thousands' of Algerian Arabs, regardless of whether or not they gave up the rules of the Koranic law and accepted French law. The whole problem of the status of these Algerian Arabs, who live in what is legally a part of metropolitan France, must some day be reconsidered.\* But it was of dubious legality for a Committee which was only a trustee of French interests to grant the precious right of French citizenship to these people when the Republic itself had never been prepared to take this important step. This attempt to buy Arab friendship was considered an internal French matter, however, and we never protested, though the action went far beyond the functions for which we had recognized the Committee.†

De Gaulle, dissatisfied with the amount of recognition he had received from England and the United States, then reopened his flirtation with Russia. In a famous speech he spoke of *cette chère, puissante Russie*. This was hardly the tone of friendship he used with his other allies, particularly the United States. That winter, in fact, there was what seemed to be a concerted effort upon the part of the Gaullist group in Algiers to undermine Franco-American friendship. Darlan's assassin, for instance, became almost a martyr in Algiers; the Justice Ministry of the Committee of Liberation issued a statement exonerating him, and flowers were put on his grave by Gaullists. The whole episode was used to highlight anti-American and chauvinistic feeling. The Gaullists also started stories—which had to be officially denied from Washington—that the United States Government intended

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\* This was written in 1944. The whole Algerian problem was indeed reconsidered starting in November 1954, in a war lasting seven and a half years, leading to Algerian independence on 18 March 1962

† See Appendix XXIX, p. 336

to deal with Vichy after the liberation of France. The State Department went so far as to call the reports 'inspired'.

In early February of 1944 observers were shocked to see de Gaulle begin a campaign of purges. In one of the most famous cases, that of the infamous Pucheu, the accused deserved little sympathy from the democratic world because of his black collaborationist record; the illegality with which the trial was conducted, however, was repellent to both the British and American publics.

An even more disquieting episode occurred in February 1944, when André Le Trocquer, de Gaulle's Commissioner for War, wired General Montsabert in Italy to return one Maurice Carré for internment on a charge of collaboration with the Germans. General Montsabert wrote back that he could not comply with the order because Captain Carré had just been killed in action against the Germans under such heroic circumstances that he proposed forthwith to make him a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. Carré was one of the 140 officers on the Gaullist black-list, many of whom died fighting the Germans before they could be brought to trial as 'collaborators'. Alexander E. Bogomoloff, the Russian representative in Algiers, said one day to de Gaulle: 'We had our purge, too, but we had it before, not during, the war.' Even General Juin was called back to answer certain political questions. He refused on the grounds that he considered the war against the Germans took precedence until final victory. All these events so disturbed the American authorities that they continued to hesitate to send arms to the French for what they feared might turn into internecine warfare.

Our relations with the French became more and more important after Teheran, with the imminence of D-Day. Mr Churchill, after his illness in Cairo, came back to Marrakesh and Villa La Saadia in January 1944, to recuperate. There he had a conference with General de Gaulle lasting some days. A friend of mine told me: 'Churchill washed de Gaulle's head in the fountain of the house where you used to live.' Whether his head was washed or not, de Gaulle returned to Algiers confident, and full of praise for Mr Churchill.

Teheran had decided the English once and for all to back de Gaulle completely in the hopes of having a Western Europe to balance Russia's Eastern European power.

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\* Stalin was at first obdurate on the subject of French participation in the control

We were now entering the final phase before the great day of liberation, and, as this day approached, de Gaulle became even more intransigent. He was trading on his discovery that Britain and America could be made to follow a policy of appeasement. He made further decrees covering the political censorship of the French press in North Africa. This was a complete violation of the French right of free speech, and the entire management of *France-Afrique* News Agency in Algiers resigned in protest. Wareing, in the *Daily Telegraph*, wrote an interesting exposé of this action.\* A decree†† went so far as to specify how General de Gaulle should go about taking over power in France without any consideration for the Tréveneuc Law.

The most dictatorial action of all came on 6 April 1944. The Allied world, at this time, was waiting impatiently for the opening of the Second Front. De Gaulle, now the unquestioned political leader of the exiled French, realized that his compatriots in France would be more interested in the general who came in with the liberating Allied forces than in any politician, and it also looked more and more as if the Allies intended to deal entirely through the military on D-Day. So, with characteristic bluntness, the de-Gaulle-dominated Committee, on 6 April, removed General Giraud from his post as Commander-in-Chief of the French Forces, offering him the same title of 'Inspector General of the Armed Forces,' that de Gaulle had offered Muselier in London in the spring of 1942, when he wished to liquidate him. When the press called this a 'resignation', General Giraud at last acted with political firmness. He made it abundantly clear that he had actually been dismissed, and that he would take no face-saving position.

By a decree of 4 April, de Gaulle then became the supreme military as well as civilian authority, taking over the same complete power that five months before had been forbidden, as illegal, to General Giraud. If

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of Germany, and throughout most of the conference Roosevelt was inclined to agree with him. But, as Hopkins expressed it, 'Winston and Anthony (Eden) fought like tigers for France.' And Hopkins worked constantly from his sick-bed to support them. His failure to generate any warmth in de Gaulle had not altered his conviction that France must be restored to her proper dignity, not only as her just historic due, but because stability in Europe was inconceivable without a strong, influential France. *Roosevelt and Hopkins—An Intimate History*, by Robert E. Sherwood, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1948

\* See Appendix XXXII, p. 348

† See Appendix XXX, p. 338

‡ See Appendix XXXIII, p. 356



ever the shape of a *coup d'état* was obvious, it was now. American journalists on the scene reported that the whole situation had the atmosphere of the *Brumaire*, the Napoleonic *coup d'état* of November 1799.

The next episode in our uncertain dealing with the now triumphant de Gaulle was a curious one. Our own policy-makers in Washington seemed to be at odds. On 7 April President Roosevelt indicated in a press conference that he felt it would be unfair to France to allow one group to take full political control before free elections could be held. 'Would you,' he said, 'on the question of self-determination, let the determination be made by people who are not in France?' Yet two days later the State Department officially expressed exactly the opposite point of view. On 9 April Secretary of State Hull, in his speech on foreign policy, said, 'We are disposed to see the French Committee of National Liberation exercise leadership to supervise law and order under the Allied Commander-in-Chief.' Secretary Hull was perhaps responding to the pressure within the State Department itself, and in the American press. Hull's statement was a great victory for de Gaulle and the Foreign Office. Yet it became obvious as time went on that President Roosevelt did not intend to give full and complete recognition to the Committee as the Provisional Government for France. Again de Gaulle moved swiftly. On 15 May 1944, he announced that his Committee *was* the Provisional Government of France, whether anyone wanted to recognize it or not.

By that time, the most critical point in the war was approaching—the Allied invasions of Normandy. On 11 April 1944, General de Gaulle appointed General Koenig as French liaison officer on Eisenhower's staff in London with the questionable Colonel Passy as Koenig's Chief of Staff. Under their orders, some 500 French officers were chosen for their knowledge of the Norman coast and of the English language, to act as liaison officers with the debarking troops. They worked closely with us during the long, hard weeks before the invasion.

On the eve of invasion, Mr Churchill's plane was sent to fetch General de Gaulle to London. He arrived, and was finally told the date of D-Day. De Gaulle insisted that the hour of the landings be communicated at once to the French Forces of the Interior within France so that they could take part in the liberation. This was obviously unwise for security reasons and Allied Headquarters refused to do it. This, added to the fact that de Gaulle was not allowed to speak

to the French people on the radio before General Eisenhower made his appeal, threw him into a characteristic rage. He forbade the French liaison officers who had been working with us to embark with us on the great venture of the liberation of their homeland. General Koenig, knowing the wishes of the Supreme Command, begged General de Gaulle to relent. Finally, and grudgingly, he did allow a handful of some twenty liaison officers to land in France with the liberating forces. After all our efforts to rebuild France's greatness, to give her back a great French Army, only twenty Frenchmen took part in the great day of liberation. This was the crowning blow to our original policy with France.

On D-Day, the great day of which poor Giraud had dreamed so long, he was in Algeria, in a villa near Oran. Here, in August 1944, incidentally, he was the victim of several attempts on his life, during one of which he was badly wounded.\* These attempts were highly suspicious.

After D-Day, de Gaulle sat back in London, watching the liberation of France from a distance, renewing a campaign for full recognition. He made one flying visit to the Normandy beaches on 14 June 1944, and then returned to London. (The same day, in the midst of the tremendous sacrifice of American blood and matériel in France, a New York *Times* reporter, Harold Callender, wrote from Algiers describing the anti-American spirit there. 'Algiers,' he said, 'is not a pleasant place for Americans.')

During these weeks and months of Allied advances in Normandy de Gaulle's men went into France behind the lines and began to 'exercise leadership to supervise law and order'. They named *Préfets* and other local administrators, a power that in such circumstances only the General Councillors held temporarily under the Constitution of France and not a group of Frenchmen returning from exile. When we allowed Gaullists to circumvent the legal processes already set up by law for reorganizing France, we legalized illegality. We acted as bad trustees for our still helpless French allies. Finally, after Paris had freed itself,

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\* 'An investigation by the Gaullist authorities failed to disclose who was responsible for the attempted assassination. When Darlan was murdered Giraud suspected extremists in the de Gaulle movement had plotted to get rid of him, and now Giraud suspected that these same fanatics had instigated the assault against himself.'—MURPHY, *op. cit.*

on 23 August 1944, de Gaulle went to Paris with two American-equipped divisions under General Leclerc.

When de Gaulle first arrived in Paris, he went to the Hôtel de Ville where the resistance leaders who had struggled so courageously throughout the occupation asked three things of him: first, that he make a declaration maintaining the Republic of France according to its Constitution; second, that he include in his Provisional Government leaders of the resistance named by the resistance forces; and third, that he convoke the General and Municipal Councillors according to the Tréveneuc Law under the French Constitution. De Gaulle refused all three of these demands.

Paris was in an uproar, and the Gaullist forces seemed unable to quiet it. 'French officials pressed for a show of Allied strength in the uneasy city when the Allied commander visited Lt.-General Marie-Pierre Koenig there. General Eisenhower, after reviewing the political situation, ordered the diversion of two United States divisions and they marched—the General was careful to use this word, not paraded—through the city on the way to the front east of Paris. No British troops were immediately available for this purpose.' This was done to 'strengthen the position of General Charles de Gaulle and helped the solution of his particular problems'.\* Our de Gaulle policy ended in a final irony; we had to maintain by force of arms the very man whose anti-American feelings were well known and whose assumption of supreme power we had so long opposed.

We followed this military support with the final political gesture. On 23 October 1944, de Gaulle was given full recognition for his Committee as the Provisional Government of France from both the American and British Governments. This final appeasement was no more satisfying to de Gaulle than our other gestures. When Mr Eden and Mr Churchill came to Paris in November 1944, de Gaulle refused to make an Anglo-French alliance.† The next moment, he turned

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\* *New York Times*, 31 August 1944

† General de Gaulle had no time to see Mr Churchill and Mr Eden, let alone conclude a proposed twenty-five-year Treaty of Friendship with Britain, as he had to fly at once to Moscow to see Stalin. The price Stalin demanded for this meeting was that de Gaulle had to allow Thorez and the other French Communist leaders back into France, with all charges of treason against them dropped. Only then did Stalin consent to make a twenty-five-year Friendship Treaty with de Gaulle. These Frenchmen had fled to Russia at the outbreak of war in 1939

around and made a Franco-Russian alliance. His next act was decidedly anti-American.

A meeting between President Roosevelt and de Gaulle was arranged by American and French diplomats at the time of the Yalta Conference in February 1945. To the surprise of Georges Bidault, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, de Gaulle agreed to meet the President on his way back to the United States in any place in France designated by the President. The meeting was fixed for Algiers, but de Gaulle at the last minute refused to keep the appointment. This action could only be interpreted in this country as a direct snub to the head of the government that had spent the most in matériel and blood to liberate France. The French people also interpreted it the same way, and de Gaulle received severe criticism in France.

Today,\* General de Gaulle, who proved indifferent to Giraud's efforts to build a great French Army,† is calling for just such an Army, and, characteristically, blaming the United States for not giving it to France. His just claims that France should occupy the Rhineland, the Saar, the Ruhr, and play a predominant role in the occupation of Germany, become hollow ones when France lacks sufficient military force to fulfil these obligations.‡ If arms are lacking for the French, de Gaulle is more responsible than any other Frenchman. His demands for American economic aid are doubly ironic in view of his notorious

\* i.e. 1944

† See Appendix XXXIV, p. 358

‡ The following extract from Harry Hopkins's memorandum (quoted by Sherwood, *op. cit.*) is another example of de Gaulle's obstructive attitude towards the Supreme Allied Commander-in-Chief, and confirms the uncertainty of his position in France:

'Eisenhower lives in a very lovely but modest home, surrounded by a great German forest and you get no impression of his having any side or pretentiousness about him. He talked at great length and freely about the strategy and tactics of the war and is quite satisfied with his whole record. He is anxious to get our troops back to their agreed occupation zones and thinks that any further delay will make trouble in Russia. . . .

'While I was there he was mixed up with very serious difficulties with the

as Russia was then allied with Germany against France. Once back in France these Communist leaders set about immediately reorganizing the French Communist Party. Above all, this meeting with Stalin gave de Gaulle an opportunity he always seemed to enjoy: that of playing off one ally against another

and long-standing anti-American policies, dating back to his first emergence on the world scene. Those policies have been continued since his return to France. Certainly de Gaulle's ultimate and greatest disservice to France, and, indeed, to the democratic world is the fact that he is responsible for a wave of anti-French feeling in the United States. All of France and every Frenchman is associated with all his unfriendly actions. Old ties of friendship have been strained by the attitude of a political party striving to stay in power. The results are ominous for our interest in western Europe, and for the peace of the world.

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French who, against his orders, were maintaining soldiers in Italy and had refused to withdraw them. He said the French General had a technical right to refuse but in view of the United States request de Gaulle's position was indefensible. He said that the matter was out of his hands, however, and in the hands of the President. I saw the various dispatches later in Paris in which the French Commander in Italy had written a very abrupt and threatening note to the American Commander and had refused point-blank to remove his troops and stated that if any effort was made to move the French troops he, the French General, would consider it an unfriendly act. At the Embassy in Paris the question arose as to whether de Gaulle actually knew of this letter and had inspired it. It is unthinkable that the French General would take such high-handed action without some assurance that he would be backed up in Paris, so most of the people in the Paris Embassy seemed to think that de Gaulle knew of the action. The telegram from President Truman, which I read, had been received by de Gaulle the day before and had been answered unsatisfactorily. Truman put it right on the line that unless those troops were moved at once he would stop all Lend Lease to the French troops. In fact he told de Gaulle that he had ordered them stopped. In view of the fact that de Gaulle already had a public fight on with the British over the Levant, it seemed to me that he was being put in a pretty tight corner if he was going to take on the United States on the issue he had chosen. Later he backed down and the troops were removed.

'Caffery, our Ambassador in France, urged Truman not to release the correspondence. There is no doubt in my mind that if the correspondence had been released at that particular moment de Gaulle's position in France would have been untenable and he would have been forced to resign. I learned later that Churchill wanted Truman to release it and so did Admiral Leahy but Truman finally decided that he would not do so.

'When I returned to Washington I urged Truman to acquaint Stalin of the French incident'

## Problems of Our French Dilemma

From this story of our French dilemma some obvious points emerge. Our failure in this field is widely admitted. How did the breakdown in Franco-American relations come about? There were various turning points, I believe, at which our diplomacy could have better defended American interests and preserved Franco-American friendship as well.

Perhaps the one underlying diplomatic mistake was the failure of the State Department to recall Mr Murphy once his original mission had been ably accomplished. Mr Murphy and his group of Economic Control officers were sent to North Africa, as it turned out, to make a revolution. Our job was to get North Africa to revolt against the questionable neutrality of the Vichy Government. People who set out to foment revolution cannot use the very elements maintaining the status quo: in this case the French Army, Navy, and Vichy officials, all under German pressure. Mr Murphy had to dig into the North African underworld to find agents. These agents were often far from representative of the best elements in France. Yet we were left definitely in their debt.

I do not wish to impugn the patriotism of the Frenchmen who helped us, but it is true that, in many instances, they turned to us solely because of our potential strength. With success, they seemed to expect a personal reward and to have us take time to fill all their individual ambitions and aspirations. This was obviously impossible, above all in the midst of a war. The State Department should have immediately removed Mr Murphy and every one of his assistants once the French were fighting as our allies in Tunisia. Had this been done, the diplomatic job would have been infinitely easier. This was, I believe, a necessity that should have been foreseen. Our American diplomatic policy should have been carried out, preferably, by a man of Cabinet rank, well briefed in all our pre-landing activities and allegiances, but with no personal debt to anyone. Diplomacy cannot be

implemented by *agents provocateurs*, and this is the most accurate term to describe the Murphy mission.

Even if the State Department wasn't prepared to do this, there was another factor that should have been taken into consideration. Mr Murphy and the rest of us had been bogged down in the details of the pre-landing job too long and had lost our usefulness in the bigger picture. Fresh minds and energy were needed to accomplish this first extension of the United States in European politics with force and sureness. Contrary to all his many critics, I sincerely believe Mr Murphy's work was excellent until the French were at war in Tunisia. His task had been enough to exhaust a much younger man. It was understandably difficult for him to see his way through the barrage of problems that came up in 1943 and to avoid the mistakes that were certainly made.

In spite of all this, our overall policy could have been successfully implemented in North Africa if four problems had been handled differently while our military strength was at its apex. We never again had a chance to solve them successfully.

First, in regard to Jean Monnet: he was essentially a businessman with international banking experience and had never been a diplomat. By his very training and experience a businessman is ill fitted for diplomatic service. A banker or an industrialist, if he is not satisfied with negotiations with some company, can turn to any number of rival concerns to accomplish his objective. He thinks in terms of competition, which means almost infinite choice. The diplomat has no such range. A representative of the United States Government negotiating Franco-American relations has but one choice. He is obliged to deal with France. Again, unlike a businessman, a diplomat must deal with intangibles. His job is to guard national human interests as well as material ones. In guarding the former the highest degree of moral integrity and personal disinterestedness is needed; in guarding the latter what is sometimes called 'commercial honesty' is all that is required. Finally, the businessman can wash his hands of an unprofitable enterprise, whereas the diplomat's mistakes become history, and his country must live with them. The Monnets of this world should never be allowed to carry business methods into international affairs.

Our second mistake was in our handling of de Gaulle in the early stages. When he arrived in North Africa, he proved almost immediately his determination to carry out France's political role and not her

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

military one. He showed his lack of balance right away by resigning in a burst of temper from the Committee. This resignation should have been accepted at once. Then as a general he had but one choice: join his compatriots on the field of battle or get out of the French picture entirely. Such a clear opportunity never presented itself again. At that moment France's political future, as has since been proved, and as President Roosevelt then realized, depended upon her military rebirth. If General Giraud and the Committee, continuing their roles of political trustees of French interests, had been firmly and clearly advised at this moment to accept General de Gaulle's resignation, put French politics aside for the duration and had actively thrown their energies into building a great Army, the whole French story would have been different.

This leads me to my third point.

All through the Algiers episode, General Giraud was given advice that wrecked him politically. I do not maintain that it is the role of an American diplomat to *force* a foreign leader to take any particular advice. I do maintain it is his role to present his country's overall policy so clearly and forcefully that a foreign leader will be *persuaded* that it is to the national interests of his own country to co-operate with that country's most useful friend. General Giraud, as I have said repeatedly, showed total political ineptitude, but he was sincere and trustworthy, striving always to see his country retake her place with her allies by having Frenchmen liberate France. American prestige was so great in 1943 in North Africa that it is a sad reflection on our diplomacy that we handled Giraud so weakly.

Foreign Office policy made all three of our mistakes more likely, but still not unavoidable. At the period of our fourth and final chance to stem de Gaulle's march towards total power our previous failures had so increased de Gaulle's influence that the Foreign Office fulfilled its ambitions for de Gaulle much more easily.

By the time we went into Europe, de Gaulle had eliminated all political competition. We had to recognize him as active trustee of French interests as well as work with his government on our military problems. But we should never have allowed the Gaullists, when they entered France, to name *Préfets* and all sorts of local officials. The local administration of France was intact and working, not because of the Vichy Government but in spite of it.

Why did we fail at all four points?



One obvious reason is the personal failures of our men on the scene which I have already mentioned. This brings up the whole much-discussed question of how we can attract qualified men to serve in the State Department. There is no space here to go into this very complex subject but it is obvious from our North African experience that we need men with not only training but assurance in dealing with the foreign elements that too often dazzle or mislead us.

Henry James once wrote: 'It is a complex fate—being an American—and one of the responsibilities it entails is fighting against a superstitious valuation of Europe.' Over a hundred years ago, in a situation very similar in many ways to our present French problem, the famous 'XYZ Affair', John Marshall, Charles C. Pinckney, and Elbridge Gerry had to assert the rights of a newly-born United States with the powerful and wily Talleyrand. Gerry made 'a superstitious valuation' of this suave European statesman, but the more able John Marshall was not deceived. Staunchly he defended our country's interests, and found his backing in the American people. We need more men with this sort of courage.

But beyond this failure of our diplomats on the scene was the failure on the highest Anglo-American policy levels. Mr Roosevelt held firmly one point of view in which he was, in principle but not always in practice, backed by Mr Churchill. Another and conflicting point of view was held by large sections of British and American public opinion. This weight of public opinion was shrewdly used, as we have seen, by British Foreign Office policy makers. Our State Department eventually followed their ideas. We should have realized sooner and more completely the whole trend of Foreign Office policy if we were to have a strong policy of our own.

What is the moral for Americans? We must know more, obviously. Policies must be openly thrashed out and backed by informed public opinion. This does not mean that negotiations also should be openly publicized. Often, and especially in time of war, negotiations cannot for obvious reasons be revealed. But the policy governing these negotiations can always be publicly weighed in a democracy.

At the time of writing, the future of Franco-American relations is dim. When de Gaulle was installed in France a French Government with an active and determined anti-American point of view came to power for the first time in modern history. Consequently American political influence there is on the wane. This is true all over the

European continent as American troops return home. Alas, it looks more and more today as if our State Department, in following the Foreign Office by supporting de Gaulle, had indeed misspent their energies. What is more, there is increasing evidence that he holds profoundly anti-British views as well.\*

The one hopeful sign in all this picture is de Gaulle's increasing unpopularity with the liberal elements among the French people. But this in itself is dangerous for Anglo-American relations with France, for, if de Gaulle is thrown from power, England (and the United States) will be rightly† blamed for having inflicted him on France, yet if he stays, there is little evidence so far that he will look to us with sympathy.

Our moral leadership in France has passed to Great Britain. The hope of the democratic world must now be that an informed British public will realize the true situation in France, the key to western Europe, and will do everything possible to strengthen French democracy and to keep France in the Atlantic, democratic world. This important task would be unnecessary if Anglo-American policy with France had sincerely sought to restore democratic liberal principle in France. In order to have accomplished this the grave facts in the whole de Gaulle history should not have been hidden by the British and American Governments from their French allies as well as the British and American public.

The British public, like the American public, has a remarkable moral instinct. This has been constantly demonstrated throughout English history. But never in recent times was it shown more clearly than when this just political instinct of the English people was in direct conflict with their Government's foreign policy in the Abyssinian affair. The Foreign Office was only too complaisant and compromising. The British public, however, proved with what shrewdness they sensed the Fascist menace and how profoundly shocked they were by Fascist aggression. An amusing demonstration of this, on a small plane, was the fact that several Italian seed firms went bankrupt because British subjects all over the world stopped buying birdseed for their pets from

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\* This was written in 1944 but it is even more true to-day

† I have used the word 'rightly' here and wish to emphasize it because the French have a tiresome tendency to blame another country and never themselves for everything that goes wrong in France

these firms. But on a larger plane, the British public in the Great British Peace Ballot of 1935 showed their horror and their courage by an overwhelming vote in favour of sanctions, knowing full well that sanctions meant war. At that time this was not Foreign Office policy. Then as I believe now in the French problem, the Foreign Office was out of line.

The hope for peace in the world, like the hope for better relations between all the great democracies, rests with the people themselves, so full of instinctive moral wisdom. They must never allow themselves to be by-passed by the manœuvring of professional diplomats who are unresponsive to their desires. If both the British and American people had been fully informed, we would never have been defeated by the political ruthlessness of Gaullism. If the peoples of our two democracies take a fuller and more informed mutual interest in the detailed workings of diplomacy, we need never fail again.



# Epilogue

*New York, 1966*

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Looking back on the exciting drama of the North African mission in which I was involved, I am struck, above all, by my initial ignorance in two important respects: I knew almost nothing about that part of the world; I had no conception of the infinite work that had gone, and would go, into this venture. My ignorance of North Africa began to disappear as, for two years, I travelled endlessly by air, train, and motor-car in this fascinating land, read as much of its history as I could find, and eagerly pursued personal contacts with innumerable indigenous and foreign inhabitants of this western extremity of the Orient. My other blind spot could disappear only after I studied the voluminous literature produced after the war by most of the military, diplomatic, and political figures who had dominated this period.

It was after France's sudden, crushing defeat in 1940 that President Roosevelt asked Mr Murphy to make a fact-finding tour of the French African empire. General Weygand controlled this vast region for France. The President refused to believe that this former Chief-of-Staff of General Foch could be pro-German or defeatist.\*

In the urgency of the moment, Mr Murphy's tour was carried out speedily yet thoroughly. Early in January 1941 his report was in the hands of the President, who wrote across it, 'I have read this with great interest. F. D. R.' Here was the confirmation of his vision: the possibility of starting the liberation of Europe through North Africa. This report remained the keystone of the first phase of Allied action towards this end. But almost two long years of planning and waiting had to follow before it could be put into execution.

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\* That the President was right is proved by evidence brought out at the Nürnberg war-crime trials: Field-Marshal Keitel's fear of Weygand's rallying French revenge from North Africa was so great that he ordered his assassination—although this order was never executed, it explains German insistence on Weygand's recall from Algiers and his hasty imprisonment in Germany after the Allied North African landings (*New York Times*, 1 December 1945)

Militarily, America's entry through Africa into active participation in World War II in Europe was undoubtedly a success. Diplomatically, however, it was, I believe, to prove a double defeat for France's allies: first, the defeat of America by de Gaulle and the British; second, twenty years later, the defeat of Britain by de Gaulle. In this Epilogue, with the advantage of hind-sight, I wish to review the reasons for my belief.

From 18 June 1940, when General de Gaulle broadcast from London ('France has lost a battle but not a war'), Britain loyally and consistently proffered him her aid. Even though subsequently British leaders may have often felt that his faults were serious, they nevertheless continued to give him their support. Had the British and American leaders, from the Prime Minister, the President, and General Eisenhower on down, been able to foresee the power of pure propaganda as against facts (I am speaking of de Gaulle's propaganda as against his actual military accomplishments), I think they would have taken drastic action to force him either to accept a military role or to retire from the scene. Had this been done, post-war French relations with Britain and the United States would certainly have been less emotional and infinitely smoother. But policy, alas, cannot be based on hind-sight. One can only analyse the causes for its success or failure.

When American troops were landing in French North Africa with their British allies, it was generally believed that Britain's popularity in France in no way matched America's. By that time the British Government had spent approximately £70,000,000 on the Gaullist movement.\* Looking ahead to a post-war Europe, many British leaders (Mr Eden and his Foreign Office advisers, in particular) felt that de Gaulle could serve a double purpose. As soon as he completely

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\* 'British relations with de Gaulle were quite different, however. As Macmillan explained to me in one of our private talks, the British Government had invested a great deal of prestige and money—he mentioned the sum of seventy million pounds—since it had backed this French dark horse in the gloomiest days of 1940. Admitting that de Gaulle was a "difficult person", Macmillan pointed out that the indomitable Frenchman had nevertheless shared British determination to continue the fight against Nazi Germany when the odds against British victory seemed tremendous. Macmillan declared that British self-interest and prestige and honour all demanded that the British Government should support de Gaulle's political aspirations. The French leader was determined to push his own London Committee into the African administration, and Macmillan said that the British Government felt bound to support that objective insofar as it could be satisfied without endangering military operations'—MURPHY, *op.cit.*

dominated the French Committee of National Liberation in Algiers, wouldn't recognition of this Committee as the legal government of France restore British popularity? In view of de Gaulle's fully publicized anti-American attitude, wouldn't a British-backed de Gaulle dilute France's pro-Americanism? Wasn't it possible that after the war the United States might revert to the strict isolationism practised during Britain's darkest hour and thus leave Britain with, at best, a very independent or, at worst, an anti-British France across the Channel?

With this in mind, it was natural that Britain wanted complete Allied recognition of de Gaulle. Only then could she remove him from her pay-roll and, with the recuperation of French gold reserves from Martinique, be repaid her investment. It was logical that she should attempt to assure a post-war French government friendly and grateful for her help. Unfortunately for all of us, Britain picked the wrong man. Gratitude and friendliness are not foremost among de Gaulle's qualities.

In 1940 America's French policy was quite different from Britain's. We had not had the painful experience caused by an ally who at a crucial time not only had made an armistice but had come to doubtful terms with the enemy. Our policy was based on a belief that Frenchmen were our friends—defeated, yes, but still potential allies. The British based on de Gaulle their hopes for France. He was the only Frenchman at hand who wanted to continue the war. In retrospect, the war he waged from London, using a microphone and a propaganda press, appears as a very strange kind of war indeed. He looked upon those of his compatriots who did not follow him as being not merely mistaken men but enemies and traitors. He waged his war of words not so much against the Germans as against other Frenchmen. We, on the contrary, felt that few Frenchmen were really pro-German and that, once given the chance to take up arms, most Frenchmen would again prove to be our good allies. Thus, the first phase in the execution of our policy towards France was to give them this chance.

President Roosevelt was the architect of our relations with France. The 1940 report by Mr Murphy became the blue-print, and the execution of this first phase was assigned to him. He did it admirably, as I have tried to show in this book. The second phase, however, is another story. It was an infinitely more subtle one and consequently even more difficult to execute. It had to do with the future of France after the victory—a policy dear to the President, conceived and tenaciously pursued by him even after our diplomatic defeat allowed

de Gaulle and his group to run off with the sovereignty of France.

The best description of this second phase is, I think, a memorandum from the papers of the President's adviser, Harry Hopkins (it is dated 24 December 1942, the day Admiral Darlan was murdered in Algiers):

The sovereignty of France rests with the French people. Only its expression was suspended by German occupation. The indispensable element for the restoration of France is the assurance of conditions making that expression possible when the time comes.

No French political authority can exist or be allowed to attempt to create itself outside of France. It is the duty of the United States and Great Britain to preserve for the people of France the right and opportunity to determine for themselves what government they will have, and the French people as well as the world must receive that solemn assurance.

The present dissensions are due to the concealed competition for future political power. De Gaulle seeks recognition by England and the United States on the basis of suppressed but assumed endorsement by the French people. Darlan will attempt to build a regime on the basis that he represents Pétain, the regularly constituted regime of France.

The sympathy of the French that expressed itself for de Gaulle reflects not a choice of de Gaulle as the future head of the French Government but the French anxiety to continue to *fight* Germany alongside of England and the United States. They would, however, certainly resist a government, even if provisional, which would owe its initial authority to foreign recognition. The basis of legitimacy which permitted Darlan to effectively bring North Africa alongside the Allies is due to the fact that he represented what was then the existing constituted authority of Vichy. He was thus able to give orders which were followed by the local military commanders and the local administration. Indeed, while, as it has been proved since, most responsible officials wanted at heart to co-operate with America and Great Britain, their action had to be determined by an order from the regular central authority. Men entrusted with authority in an orderly society are not revolutionaries, and it is to be revolutionary to act contrary to the orders of the central accepted authority. Admiral Darlan gave the order that was wished for—but the order had to be given. He alone could give it, not General Giraud at that time.

But now that this has been done, and that the various local commanders have sided with the Allies, it is important to prevent the use which Darlan made of Pétain's authority from being developed into a legitimacy recognized or fostered by the Allies. Such a development in North Africa would be a denial of those conditions which alone will enable the French people to give free expression to their sovereignty.\*

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\* SHERWOOD, *op. cit.*



## EPILOGUE

This second phase of our policy, then, was aimed at the future, post-war France. It was essentially a diplomatic one. How were the Allies to restore the sovereignty of France without inflicting on her a government chosen by her allies and not by her people? There was but one way: application of the Tréveneuc law incorporated in the French constitution of 1875.\* But somehow in the North African shuffle our diplomats—everyone, in fact—lost sight of it even though the American and British leaders, as well as de Gaulle, had agreed that its provisions should be followed. President Roosevelt believed we had a moral obligation, almost a sacred trust, to fulfil towards our German-occupied and hence inarticulate French allies. Whether the British leaders had this same belief is another matter.

Diplomacy is a contest, and to play it with skill one must have the ability to foresee all possible eventualities. One must reduce the play of chance to a minimum and, when chance does intervene, be prepared to turn it to advantage in achieving the desired result. Successful diplomats know their objective and, to the fullest extent possible, control the events that must happen to bring it about, being careful to ensure that these events appear as chance ones. Diplomats employing these methods are likely to win. I think this is exactly what happened in this instance: diplomats for de Gaulle succeeded in bringing about the utter defeat of the President's policy.

After Darlan had been assassinated and the proposed meeting of Giraud and de Gaulle had been arranged, Mr Murphy and his British counterpart, Mr Macmillan, were engaged, willy-nilly, in a diplomatic contest. Each one's aim was to forward his country's policy. The British wanted de Gaulle off their pay-roll and out of their hair; both the British and the Americans wanted a fusion of all French forces in order to obtain a maximum war effort. But the British evidently wanted to go much further for de Gaulle than was consistent with the President's policy. Indeed one today feels astonishment at the lengths to which they were willing to go for him and can only speculate as to their reasons for doing so. For by that time the British knew de Gaulle well. They knew what a bad ally he could be—how allergic he was to any fusion whatsoever unless it left him completely in charge. They also knew how unscrupulous he was in gaining his ends: for him, no holds were barred and, if rules were broken, it was never his fault

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\* See Appendix VI, p. 259

but the fault of his henchmen (any successes, however, were to be credited exclusively to him). He had, in fact, the *goût de coup d'état*, and this, too, the British knew.

In January 1943 he agreed to come to the Casablanca Conference only after Churchill threatened to abandon him completely if he refused to show up. Upon arrival he sat down for preliminary talks with Giraud. The latter had known de Gaulle only as a professional soldier and naturally thought he still was one. But by now de Gaulle was exclusively a politician, and Giraud was soon to learn to his sorrow how complete this transformation had become.

At their first talks Giraud communicated the good news that he had obtained a promise from the Americans of enough military equipment to rearm speedily the French North African Army. De Gaulle made the cynical reply: 'What good are these ten divisions that you want to rearm? It is useless to risk the life of a single French soldier. The end of the war for France is a political question to be decided around a conference table.' In other words, de Gaulle felt that British and American soldiers, but not French ones, should be killed liberating France. For him, the war was over and Frenchmen should concentrate on winning post-war power. Then, even more cynically, he said to Giraud, 'You certainly have the backing of the Americans and no doubt the sympathy of the British, but it is only I who can talk with the Russians.'\*

Four months later, when de Gaulle finally moved to Algiers, it became more and more apparent that the Americans really did mean to equip as big a French army as possible. President Roosevelt believed this was the surest and best way to heal the wounded French national honour, an excellent therapy for sublimating a deep-seated inferiority complex that was eating away like a canker at French pride.† And, as Giraud's divisions were being armed in spite of de Gaulle, it looked for a time as if there were a good possibility that American policy would be successfully executed. If de Gaulle was to gain the power for which he thirsted, Giraud would have to be eliminated and the French Army taken over. In achieving these things, de Gaulle and the

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\* Taken from notes made by André Poniatowski, a Frenchman who took part in these talks. See Appendix XXXIV, page 358

† When one encounters a sort of satisfaction and pride in Frenchmen whenever de Gaulle, often rudely, 'tells off' England and the United States it is, I believe, an indication of this continuing inferiority complex

British were well served by M. Jean Monnet. In fact, this man's role was so decisive and yet so subtly played that it deserves further study, after more than twenty years, in the light of facts now available.

Before the war, M. Monnet was little known in American political circles. He came to Washington as a member of the French Purchasing Commission; after the collapse of France he was appointed personally by Mr Churchill to the British Supply Council. Thus Mr Hopkins came to know and appreciate this intelligent man and, at the Casablanca Conference, suggested to Mr Roosevelt that Monnet might be just the adviser General Giraud needed in his double role at Algiers as French civil administrator and military commander.

Mr Roosevelt spoke to General Giraud about Monnet, who was unknown to Giraud. The latter said he would welcome Monnet to Algiers if he would be useful. Above all it was hoped that Monnet's experience in procuring military supplies would help Giraud in equipping his army. This possibility was discussed with Mr Murphy, who in his book, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, says: 'Time and again the President had completely ignored the State Department in more important African matters than this seemed to be, but now he cabled Secretary Hull asking for advice about appointing Monnet. Hull replied that Monnet seemed to be more closely linked with de Gaulle than appeared on the surface, and Roosevelt let the matter drop.'

However, Giraud's friend, Lemaigre-Dubreuil, returning from Washington and aware of Monnet's role there, suggested to Giraud that he should invite Monnet to Algiers. The invitation promptly followed, and Monnet arrived early in February 1943. He was extremely well armed, having letters from Mr Hopkins, then living in the White House, to both Mr Murphy and General Eisenhower. Soon he was using these to pass himself off in Algiers as having, as Mr Murphy says in his book, 'almost the status of personal envoy of the President in French North Africa'.

Monnet posed as being in full agreement and sympathy with the President's French policy. He may have helped Giraud procure military supplies but, first and foremost, he acted as his political adviser. Never was a situation so easy to exploit: on the one hand, the naïve, guileless General, loathing politics, concentrating almost exclusively on re-equipping his army, which, in spite of insufficient, outmoded arms, was fighting in Tunisia with the courage of lions

(probably because they were so badly equipped, his men suffered casualties that far outnumbered those of the British and the Americans combined, see p. 120); on the other, the wily M. Monnet, doling out political advice that wrecked Giraud completely, leaving a vacuum speedily filled by the dynamic though dubious forces of de Gaulle.

M. Monnet had other powerful friends in Washington who served him well: Mr John McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War, and Mr William Bullitt, former ambassador to Russia and France. As the late Robert E. Sherwood put it in his book, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, the period under discussion being late March 1943:

Eden has stated the British view that they would greatly prefer to deal with one strong French authority, established in Algiers and representing all possible elements of French opinion. Roosevelt and Hull said that they preferred 'to keep the position fluid' and to deal with French individuals—for example, they wished to deal separately with the French authorities in the Pacific islands and with those in Martinique. Roosevelt persisted in his belief that no single French authority could be set up by the Allies and recognized by them without eventually incurring the bitter resentment of the people of metropolitan France itself. This was the margin of disagreement—but actually, at that time the French political situation was improving. Jean Monnet had arrived in Algiers and was rendering considerable service to Giraud. Monnet was dedicated to the achievement of unity among the French factions, and the eventual French Committee of National Liberation owed much to his efforts. John J. McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War, made a visit to North Africa which was most helpful to Eisenhower and to the situation in general; for McCloy was one who believed that the time had come to put the Vichy policy away in the files as finished business and to concentrate our policy on strengthening the leaders of the French Resistance groups who were largely devoted to de Gaulle. Giraud took an increasingly pro-democracy, anti-Pétainist position and, advised by Monnet, publicly expressed his hopes for a union with de Gaulle. Months were to pass before this union was achieved, but progress towards it was being made.

Mr McCloy's belief that French Resistance groups were largely devoted to de Gaulle was formed, no doubt, in Washington by Monnet, whose information came directly from London and the Gaullist headquarters. I have described in Chapter 15, pages 190 and 200, of my book what I knew about the French Resistance and the British attitude towards it at that time. My further investigations into

## EPILOGUE

this subject since the war have given me no cause to change the spirit of the views I expressed in 1944.\* The fact that the British turned over to de Gaulle, before he moved his headquarters to Algiers, most of their contacts with the Resistance in France is convincing proof, I think, that early in 1943 they had determined to give him full backing for his take-over in Algiers. But to accomplish this, General Giraud had to be eliminated. M. Monnet went to work. Mr Murphy in *Diplomat Among Warriors* gives a clear account of the atmosphere in Algiers at that time as well as a vivid description of M. Monnet's 'work':

All through that spring of 1943, as Americans, Britons, Frenchmen, and Arabs fought and died in the concluding battles against Germans in Africa, a political civil war was being waged simultaneously around Algiers. Thousands of de Gaulle supporters drifted in from several directions, some arriving from other French African colonies, some coming from England and France, some from Montgomery's British Eighth Army in Egypt. After operating on a shoestring for so long, de Gaulle somehow had acquired ample funds which now enabled him to offer handsome pay increases to induce French officers and civil servants to throw in their lot with him. These offers were tempting to the underpaid Frenchmen in Africa. Such recruiting dangerously weakened French fighting morale, but de Gaulle was playing for higher stakes than a subordinate role in Allied military campaigns. His purpose, as he repeatedly stated, was to organize around himself a central French authority, recognized as such, qualified to bargain on even terms with Great Britain and the United States.

Soon after the arrival of Monnet, high-level negotiations started between representatives of de Gaulle and Giraud. As Giraud's adviser, Monnet always attended these sessions and he summarized their results for Macmillan and me. Since he was entitled to participate in these French negotiations, and we were not, this arrangement seemed excellent. We assumed that we were being informed of all important developments. Monnet did not conceal from us his impatience with Giraud's political ineptitude. He exclaimed: 'When the General looks at you with those eyes of a porcelain cat, he comprehends nothing!' But Monnet worked skilfully to win Giraud's confidence and soon succeeded.

As the battles in Africa drew to a close in May, it became apparent that de Gaulle and Giraud were near agreement. Being advised of this, Prime

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\* I should however add that it was de Gaulle's pact with the Russians that first showed him the potential value of the Resistance. This pact is said still to be in existence, and would explain the equivocal attitude of French communists during the Algerian war

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

Minister Churchill and Foreign Secretary Eden arrived in Algiers to celebrate the 'marriage' which had been a major British objective, so long delayed. On June 3 it was announced that de Gaulle had accepted a formula which seemed almost identical with the one we had proposed at Casablanca five months earlier. Giraud and de Gaulle were to become joint chairmen of a seven-man French Committee of National Liberation which would replace the Imperial Council. Monnet was to be a member of this committee, as Giraud's chief political representative. The next day, June 4, the British group entertained the French committee members at a 'victory lunch' to which no Americans were invited. It seemed fitting that the British should celebrate the smooth interposition of their protégé into the Algiers administration, and Macmillan told me that everything went off well at the luncheon except that de Gaulle was even more reserved than usual.

Three days later the skies fell. Navy Commander Viret, the genial aide of Giraud, telephoned me about six o'clock in the morning and asked urgently if I would please come right away to French headquarters. I was not unaccustomed to early morning calls because Giraud normally began his day at 4.30 a.m. His favourite quip was that the difference between generals and diplomats was that the former arose very early to do nothing, nothing, all day; while the latter arose very late for the same purpose. So I went to Giraud's office immediately, where the conscientious Viret showed me several decrees which Giraud, after weeks of negotiations with Monnet, had signed during the night in his capacity as Chairman of the French Imperial Council, the de facto governing body in French Africa. Glancing hastily through the pile of documents, I saw that Giraud had practically signed away all his powers to de Gaulle. I asked the commander: 'Does General Giraud know what he has done?' Viret shrugged wearily.

I went in to see Giraud and explained the effect of the decrees. Giraud cried in obvious astonishment: 'But I never was told that!' He read the decrees carefully, as though for the first time. Then after a moment's reflection he too shrugged his shoulders, saying that he had been informed that these matters were purely internal French affairs which required no prior consultation with Americans or Britons. This did not seem to displease Giraud, a fighting soldier, who was under the impression that he would retain control of French military forces in any event, an authority which he cherished much more than political strength. In taking leave of Giraud that morning, I told him as sympathetically as I could that he had signed himself out of power. Soon after de Gaulle took over, Giraud was relieved of his command.

Returning to my office, I telephoned Macmillan and described what had happened. We then asked Monnet to join us, and related to him the

## EPILOGUE

circumstances as we saw them, pointing out that the three of us had worked rather closely for several months during which we had given him our confidence. Monnet was non-committal and in effect told us that he really had no information to impart regarding French internal affairs. He referred to the fact that René Massigli, a career diplomat, was handling Foreign Affairs in the French Imperial council. Monnet thus politely declared French independence.\*

All these events took place in Algiers to the accompaniment of a veritable symphony of propaganda broadcast from London and skillfully conducted by de Gaulle's two minions from the Gaullist B.C.R.A. (Central Bureau of Information and Action): Boris, an ex-journalist, and Lieutenant-Colonel Dewavrin, known as 'Passy'. These men ran de Gaulle's propaganda machine in London. As weapons, they used pens dipped in vitriolic acid to compose propaganda against anyone who stood in de Gaulle's way. Strangely enough, his opponents seemed seldom to be Germans but were more often Frenchmen such as Pétain and Darlan. Others, too, were attacked, including President Roosevelt and State Department officials—in fact, anyone who seemed to oppose de Gaulle's vaulting ambition. At this particular time, to further Monnet's intrigues in Algiers, Giraud was the victim. These warriors of propaganda created for him a totally false public image, that of an anti-Semitic, reactionary fascist.

Monnet's methods, of course, were not those of the Central Bureau of Information and Action. He, like General Catroux, served de Gaulle on a plane different from that of his London henchmen. Monnet and Catroux were more subtle but more deadly, passing themselves off as fully understanding both the British-Gaullist point of view and the official American one. Their only aim, so they said, was to serve as catalytic agents to bring about a fusion, or union, of every point of view. M. Monnet told Mr Murphy upon his arrival in Algiers that he had come 'not so much to serve Giraud as to seek a solution which would create unity among all French factions'. As is now clearly apparent, the 'unity' desired by Monnet meant the subjugation of all French factions to domination by de Gaulle.

There was one fundamental factor that could have served these would-be catalysts if their desire to play this role had been sincere.

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\* MURPHY, *op. cit.*

They could have insisted that the 1875 Constitution, including the Tréveneuc Law, be applied in the liberation of France. On numerous occasions de Gaulle had declared that he would follow its provisions. When he arrived in Algiers, it was expected that he would do so. But once he was there and completely in power, no further mention of the matter appears to have been made by either him, M. Monnet, Mr Macmillan, or Mr Murphy.

As the jockeying for power continued in Algiers, Monnet's ultimate aim became more apparent in Washington. He was considered so serious a danger for American policy and prestige that Mr Sumner Welles, the Under-Secretary of State, acting with the President's approval, warned the American mission in Algiers to have no more confidence in him. At this time the President decided to invite General Giraud to Washington to explain to him personally American policy towards France.

Giraud's visit was considered of capital importance because it was becoming evident that this policy was not being implemented. In the American mission at Algiers, one felt the inevitability of de Gaulle's victory, with all that it implied. Mr Murphy, head of the mission, no doubt because of this feeling, expressed repeatedly his opinion that it really did not matter if British policy won because after the war Britain would be so weak that American policy would ultimately triumph. This view, of course, overlooked the harm that de Gaulle's victory could and certainly would do.

The two warnings from Washington against Monnet went virtually unheeded. Because of age and failing health, Mr Hull, who had sent the first to Mr Roosevelt at the Casablanca Conference, was not playing a dominant role in the State Department. And Mr Welles, who five months later had sent the second to the mission at Algiers, was at this critical juncture removed from the Government. His removal requires explanation, for it had a disastrous effect on American policy in North Africa.

Mr Welles was the victim of a vicious intrigue. An ambitious, jealous associate brought to the attention of powerful members of Congress evidence of a scandalous episode that had occurred some years previously in Mr Welles's private life. Although most reluctant to deprive himself of the services of this outstanding statesman, distinguished for integrity, intelligence, and enormous powers of concentration and application, the President was forced to ask for his



## EPILOGUE

resignation.\* Mr Welles's downfall played a large part in making possible the success of the British-Monnet scheme of dealing exclusively with de Gaulle.

With Welles's warning about Monnet unheeded, an attitude of wait-and-see continued in the American mission at Algiers. And so did trust in Monnet—until, in fact, that wily man's work was irrevocably complete, as Mr Murphy makes so clear in the passage I have quoted. By taking advantage of Giraud's lack of personal ambition and political sense, Monnet had first fatally weakened that soldier's position and then totally eliminated him from the French scene. His elimination marked the final, utter defeat of the policy the President had so much wanted to follow with regard to France.

After de Gaulle forced Giraud into retirement, American prestige in North Africa began to plummet sickeningly. The President had never wanted the United States to back one Frenchman, Giraud, against another, de Gaulle. The President had never wanted any Frenchman to be in a position to claim that he and he alone represented France. Nevertheless, de Gaulle had succeeded in achieving that position. Henceforth there would be virtually no effective opposition to the ruthless, totalitarian methods he used to take over the sovereignty of France.

De Gaulle's handling of Giraud is a good example of those methods. It is obvious why he dismissed Giraud: as Commander-in-Chief of a French Army equipped by America, Giraud would in the liberation of France have stolen the limelight from de Gaulle, just as Giraud had done in the liberation of Corsica. But de Gaulle went much further than merely ousting Giraud from his military command. De Gaulle's propaganda machine, which by now had considerable influence on the Allied press, did all it could to ruin Giraud's reputation—to present him as an anti-Semitic, reactionary fascist, as someone unworthy to be de Gaulle's rival. For, to take over France, de Gaulle set out to prove that it was he and he alone who could liberate his countrymen. To do this, he employed the propaganda technique that Hitler was using: such constant, forceful repetition of half-truths and lies that eventually most people lose sight of the truth and accept them as true. For de

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\* In March 1948 Mrs Roosevelt told me of the disgust and regret her husband had felt about Mr Welles's dismissal. The President, she said, had given the intriguer a memorable tongue-lashing and refused to see him ever again

Gaulle, the pen of propaganda was always mightier than the sword. With only low cards in his hand, he bluffed on such a colossal scale that we, the Americans, holding all the high cards, opposed his ultimate aims and lost. His accomplishment may be a considerable one, but it is not one I like or admire.

Frenchmen are so human, intelligent and quick that they often make other people seem dull. They have, however, a fault that can be most exasperating: they tend to blame anybody but themselves for anything that goes wrong with France. Frenchmen opposed to de Gaulle, though, are justified in blaming others: the British for fostering his official recognition and the Americans for following their lead, however reluctantly.

In my book and in this Epilogue, M. Monnet is often mentioned. Since the war he has done outstanding work for the unification of Europe, including Britain. His design raised hopes for a new world-stabilizing factor: the unity of Western Europe. It came within an inch, even a centimetre, of realization. Unfortunately, de Gaulle has succeeded, so far at least, in blocking this encouraging project. During these last years I have often wondered if M. Monnet now regrets the great services he rendered at Algiers for his dangerously hubristic countryman, General de Gaulle.

I see now much that I would like to be able to change in my adventure in diplomacy. The net result of those North African days was in many respects disappointing and sad. France was in the war again, yes, but what a France! Instead of a France led by Frenchmen who would strain every nerve to liberate their country, it proved to be a France led by a Frenchman who, because of personal pique, gave orders that not one Frenchman could aid the Allied landings in Normandy! Furthermore it was a France whose leader, in his passionate pursuit of power against 'the Anglo-Saxons', was to name as vice-president of his post-war government Maurice Thorez, a French Communist who had deserted his country and fled to Russia while Germany and Russia were tacit allies. (De Gaulle also named two more French Communists to his cabinet in that government.)

Will de Gaulle's attitude continue in the future as it has in the past? In taking France out of NATO, in blocking the unification of Western Europe, in his hostility to Britain and America, de Gaulle is unquestionably furthering Russia's aims. How long will he continue to do so?

## EPILOGUE

On re-reading my twenty-one-year-old book, I see that in it I did not overestimate the danger of de Gaulle. Indeed, much of that book seems now to have had a prophetic tone. What I did overestimate, alas, was my country's capacity to cope with him.



# Appendices

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NOTE: It should be made clear that only Appendices II, III, IV, V, VI, XII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVIII, XXII, XXV, XXVI, XXVII, XXVIII, XXIX, XXX and XXXI appeared in the original American edition of this book. Appendices VII, XI, XIII, XXIII, XXIV, XXXII, XXXIII, first appeared in the French edition; the remainder have been added for this English edition.



## Two Portraits of de Gaulle

A. A Portrait of de Gaulle taken from *Assignment to Catastrophe*, Vol. 2, *The Fall of France*, by Major-General Sir Edward L. Spears, Bart., K.B.E., C.B., M.C. published by Heinemann, 1954.

A strange-looking man, enormously tall; sitting at the table he dominated everyone else by his height, as he had done when walking into the room. No chin, a long, drooping, elephantine nose over a closely-cut moustache, a shadow over a small mouth whose thick lips tended to protrude as if in a pout before speaking, a high, receding forehead and pointed head surmounted by sparse black hair lying flat and neatly parted. His heavy-hooded eyes were very shrewd. When about to speak he oscillated his head slightly, like a pendulum, while searching for words. I at once remembered and understood the nickname of 'Le Connétable' which Pétain said had been given him at St Cyr. It was easy to imagine that head on a ruff, that secret face at Catherine de Medici's Council Chamber.

I studied him with great interest, little thinking that for a while we should both be bent with such complete concentration on the same task, nor that later we should be driven so far apart.

That afternoon, he had a look of confidence and self-possession which was very appealing. He had, I thought, brought it from Abbeville, where he had fought a successful tank action (the only one). Fresh air had given his sallow skin a healthy colour. His cheeks were almost pink. That freshness of complexion I never saw on his face again, nor, I think, did I ever see him smile as he did when he turned towards me then. It was a frank, confident smile that belied his usual expression and made me feel I should greatly like this man. I perceived that afternoon what was perhaps the real de Gaulle, or maybe that part of him which might have prevailed had he remained a soldier, straight, direct, even rather brutal.

B. Another Portrait of de Gaulle, taken from *Journey Down a Blind Alley*, by Mary Borden (Lady Spears), published by Harper and Brothers, New York, 1946.

I remember very well the first time that I met General de Gaulle and the curious discomfort I felt when he stalked into the room. It was almost

like fear. It was certainly mingled with a painfully strong feeling of aversion. He had brought Madame de Gaulle to dine with us *en famille*. A gentle, charming, slight, timid figure, I turned to her with relief, watching de Gaulle out of the corner of my eye, not wanting to look straight at him. I watched him through the evening. His face never showed the slightest change of expression as he talked. No flicker of interest lifted his hooded eyelids. I was fascinated, the novelist came into play, I began to study him.

I had asked B. (*Lady Spears's name for her husband*) to describe him and had been puzzled by his difficulty in doing so. As a rule he was good at word portraits. Finally he had said, frowning as if intent on solving a riddle, that he was like a medieval monk, that he saw him in a cassock pushing his long hands up his sleeves. 'You know,' he had said, 'the monks' gesture.' Now as I watched de Gaulle I understood B.'s difficulty. I couldn't have described him to myself. It was as if when I looked full at him I saw nothing, nothing but a lifeless figure, wrapped in a palpable coldness that hid him as a damp cloth hides a sculptor's clay.

I met him often during the months that followed and I went on studying him. It was part of B.'s plan to introduce him to men in London who could be useful to him, and he would dine once or twice a week. I wasn't there often but I would come up sometimes from Aldershot; we would make a party of five or six, General de Gaulle, two or three Englishmen, B. and myself. The dinners were sometimes uncomfortable but always interesting. De Gaulle could be eloquent, he could make himself very agreeable if he felt so inclined. But he was often biting, scathing in his criticisms of England and the English, just as much or more so of France. His long lips would grimace as if he were drinking gall and wormwood when he talked of France. The bitterness he felt for his own country erupted like poisonous bile from his mouth. Gradually I began to understand—and I think I did understand him in those days—perhaps I do so even now.

I believe pride is the basis of his character. I think he felt the dishonour of France as few men can feel anything, and that he had literally taken on himself the national dishonour, as Christ according to the Christian faith took on himself the sins of the world. I think he was like a man during those days who had been skinned alive, and that the slightest contact with friendly, well-meaning people got him on the raw to such an extent that he wanted to bite, as a dog that has been run over will bite in its agony any would-be friend who comes to its rescue. The discomfort I felt in his presence was due, I am certain, to the boiling misery and hatred inside him.

His one relief, in fact his one pleasure, was to hate. And he hated all the world, but most especially those who tried to be his friends. He had never pretended to like the British, he didn't attempt to conceal his dislike



## APPENDIX I

now that he needed them. On the contrary, to be beholden to anyone was in itself hateful. To come to the British as a suppliant, with the disgrace of his nation burned on his forehead and in his heart, was intolerable. But he could look to no one else; his own people had failed him; the French officials reviled or snubbed him, the troops turned their backs on him; the response to his appeal was pitiable. The weaker his position the more arrogant he became. Very well, let the British help him. They needed him as much as or more than he needed them. But let there be no pretence of friendliness or sentiment about it. The Prime Minister and General Spears were using him, he would use them. He would wring out of them the arms and equipment he needed, but he wouldn't pretend to be grateful. He wasn't grateful. He hated them for giving him what he had to have. One day he would pay them back.

## APPENDIX II

### Goods Shipped Under the Murphy-Weygand Accord

*Sent on French boats from the United States to French North Africa between March 1941 and August 1942:*

Petroleum products	43,501	metric tons.
Coal	20,489	" "
Tar	1,117	" "
Coke	896	" "
Paraffin	702.23	" "
Sugar	21,498	" "
Cotton fabrics	5,198.68	" "
Cotton thread	73	" "
Tea	1,570.40	" "
Tobacco	1,537.37	" "
Condensed Milk	1,435.61	" "
Binder twine	1,113	" "
Bags	178	" "
Copper Sulphate	798	" "
Nails	350.55	" "

Also smaller amounts of medical supplies, spare parts for farm machinery, wire, etc.

*Sent to the United States from French North Africa under the same Accord:*

Cork	8,320	metric tons.
Tartar	993	" "

Also smaller amounts of local products.

## The Basis for Negotiation between the Vichy Government and the British Government

### (I) ENGLISH VIEWPOINT

- (A) *Decision of the British people and Government to carry on the war until the downfall of Hitler.*

False ideas concerning the effects of the London bombings. . . . The people are stoical, and even happy, and accept the risks of the bombings. . . . Daily life pursues its course. . . . It is necessary to give up the idea that collective fatigue may force the government to sign a compromise peace. The most peaceful nation of the world is ready to transform itself into a great war machine. Woman's significant role in this mobilization of all the nation (different auxiliary services).

- (B) *The Capacity of the British Government to Carry on the War.*

1. Total financial help of the U.S.A.
2. Increase of military apparatus: 10,000 aeroplanes for combat by next spring, bombers with a field of action permitting them to bomb all the Italian cities by attacking from Egypt. . . . Mastery of the air by 1941.

- (C) *Probable Duration of the War Depending upon the Attitude of the French Empire.*

1. With a revolt of North Africa which would permit the establishment of bases in Tunisia . . . *ONE YEAR.*
2. Without bases in Tunisia, but with the possibility of stopping the German advance in the direction of the Suez Canal and Iraq . . . *TWO OR THREE YEARS.*
3. With the loss of the Mediterranean and Egypt . . . *TEN YEARS.*

*The attitude of the French Empire* may therefore decide the length of the war, consequently decide the material and moral fate of the peoples of Europe. An enormous responsibility rests, therefore, on the shoulders of the chiefs responsible for the Empire.

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

### (D) *Great Britain's Decision Regarding France.*

1. To re-establish her entity (all her colonies) and her sovereignty if she does nothing to aid the victory of the Totalitarians, and much more, if she contributes to British victory.
2. In case the French Government handed over its air and naval bases to the Totalitarians, Great Britain would no longer answer for the future of France and her Empire.

### (E) *Attenuation of the Blockade in Case France Would Help a British Victory Either Actively or Passively.*

1. The British Government will consider the transportation of colonial food products from Dakar, from Casablanca, and the North African ports to ports of Provence (Southern France) as belonging to the coast trade; which does not come under the blockade.
2. The English Government will send an economic expert to Madrid, who will come to an understanding with a French economic expert regarding the eventual exchanges with Morocco.

### (F) *Accord Concerning the Status of the French Colonies That Have Remained Faithful to Vichy (Government).*

1. The English Government promises to try no longer to take by force or to undermine by propaganda the French colonies that have remained faithful to the Vichy Government.
2. All English aggression against the French colonies will be repulsed by arms, to avoid joint defence of said colonies by the Axis, which would be the same thing as yielding the African colonies and their bases to the Axis.

### (G) *Radio Accord.*

1. The British radio will abstain from all criticism addressed to the person of the French Head of State, Marshal Pétain.

## (II) FRENCH VIEWPOINT

### (A) *Engagement Concerning the Colonies and the Bases.*

1. The French Government promises not to try to retake by force the colonies that have gone over to de Gaulle.

### APPENDIX III

2. The French Government promises not to turn over to the Axis the ports of Provence (Southern France) nor the bases of North Africa, of Morocco and Occidental Africa.
3. The French Government will re-engage the Empire in the war the day that the English and their eventual Allies will have given proof of their strength, will be in a position to debark in number and to equip the colonial troops, who are at present without munitions, without heavy material, air defences, anti-tank guns, and means of transportation.

#### (B) *Engagement Concerning the Fleet.*

The French Government, in conformity with the solemn assurances it has already given several times to the British Government, promises to scuttle the units of her fleet rather than to allow them to fall into the hands of the Germans and the Italians. Orders to this effect, annulling all previous orders, have already been given to all ship commanders.

The above drawn up in the office of Mr Strang, at the Foreign Office, and submitted to the corrections and approval of the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill.

LONDON, 28 OCTOBER, 1940

## Letter from President Roosevelt to the Appointed Ambassador to France, Admiral Leahy

*Washington, 20 December, 1940.*

MY DEAR ADMIRAL LEAHY,

As Ambassador of the United States near the French Government, you will be serving the United States at a very critical time in the relations between the United States and France. I impose entire confidence in your ability and judgment to meet all situations which may arise. Nevertheless, for your general guidance, I feel that I may properly outline some of the basic principles which at present govern the relations of the United States with France.

(1) Marshal Pétain occupies a unique position both in the hearts of the French people and in the Government. Under the existing Constitution his word is law and nothing can be done against his opposition unless it is accomplished without his knowledge. In his decrees he uses the royal 'we' and I have gathered that he intends to rule.

Accordingly, I desire that you endeavor to cultivate as close relations with Marshal Pétain as may be possible. You should outline to him the position of the United States in the present conflict and you should stress our firm conviction that only by defeat of the powers now controlling the destiny of Germany and Italy can the world live in liberty, peace and prosperity; that civilization cannot progress with a return to totalitarianism.

I had reason to believe that Marshal Pétain was not cognizant of all of the acts of his Vice Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Monsieur Laval, in his relations with the Germans. There can be no assurance that a similar situation will not exist with the new Foreign Minister. Accordingly, you should endeavor to bring to Marshal Pétain's attention such acts done or contemplated in the name of France which you deem to be inimical to the interests of the United States.

(2) I have made it abundantly clear that the policy of this administration is to support in every way practicable those countries which are defending themselves against aggression. In harmony with this principle this Government is affording and will continue to afford to the Government of Great Britain all possible assistance short of war.

#### APPENDIX IV

You may wish from time to time to bring to the attention of Marshal Pétain and members of the Government concrete information regarding the American program to this end.

(3) I have been much perturbed by reports indicating that resources of France are being placed at the disposal of Germany in a measure beyond that positively required by the terms of the armistice agreement. I have reason to believe that aside from the selfish interests of individuals there is unrequired governmental co-operation with Germany motivated by a belief in the inevitableness of a German victory and ultimate benefit to France. I desire that you endeavor to inform yourself with relation to this question and report fully regarding it.

You should endeavor to persuade Marshal Pétain, the members of his Government, and high ranking officers in the military forces with whom you come into contact, of the conviction of this Government that a German victory would inevitably result in the dismemberment of the French Empire and the maintenance at most, of France as a vassal state.

(4) I believe that the maintenance of the French fleet free of German control is not only of prime importance to the defense of this hemisphere but is also vital to the preservation of the French Empire and the eventual restoration of French independence and autonomy.

Accordingly, from the moment we were confronted with the imminent collapse of French resistance it has been a cardinal principle of this administration to assure that the French fleet did not fall into German hands and was not used in the furtherance of German aims. I immediately informed the French Government, therefore, that should that Government permit the French fleet to be surrendered to Germany the French Government would permanently lose the friendship and good will of the Government of the United States.

Since that time I have received numerous assurances from those in control of the destiny of France that the French fleet would under no circumstances be surrendered.

On June 18, 1940, Monsieur Paul Baudoin, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, assured Ambassador Biddle 'in the name of the French Government in the most solemn manner that the French fleet would never be surrendered to the enemy'.

On July 1, 1940, President Lebrun informed Ambassador Bullitt that 'France would under no conditions deliver the fleet to Germany'.

On the same day, Marshal Pétain assured Ambassador Bullitt that orders had been issued to every Captain of the French fleet to sink his ship rather than to permit it to fall into German hands, and Admiral Darlan told Ambassador Bullitt that he had 'given absolute orders to the officers of his fleet to sink immediately any ship that the Germans should attempt to seize'.

When Marshal Pétain came into power as Chief of the French State I received renewed and most solemn assurances that the French fleet would not be surrendered to Germany. Vice Premier Laval reiterated these assurances to Mr Matthews on November 14 when he said that 'The French fleet will never fall into the hands of a hostile power.'

On November 16, Marshal Pétain, when the subject was again raised, told Mr Matthews: 'I have given the most solemn assurances that the French fleet, including the *Jean Bart* and the *Richelieu*, should never fall into Germany's hands. I have given these assurances to your Government. I have given them to the British Government, and even to Churchill personally. I reiterate them now. They will be used to defend French territory and possessions. They will never be used against the British unless we are attacked by them.' And most recently, Marshal Pétain, in a conversation with the present Chargé d'Affaires ad interim, Mr Murphy, said on December 12: 'I hope your President understands that I have kept and will continue to keep the solemn promise I made that the French fleet will be scuttled before it is allowed to fall into German hands.'

I feel most strongly that if the French Government after these repeated solemn assurances were to permit the use of the French fleet in hostile operations against the British, such action would constitute a flagrant and deliberate breach of faith to the Government of the United States.

You will undoubtedly associate with high officers of the French Navy. I desire, therefore, that in your relations with such officers, as well as in your conversations with French officials, you endeavor to convince them that to permit the use of the French fleet or naval bases by Germany or to attain German aims, would most certainly forfeit the friendship and good will of the United States and result in the destruction of the French fleet to the irreparable injury of France.

(5) You will undoubtedly be approached from numerous quarters regarding food for the French people.

There is no people on earth who have done more than the American



#### APPENDIX IV

people in relieving the suffering of humanity. The hearts of the American people go out to the people of France in their distress. As you are aware we are continuing our efforts to arrange for the forwarding through the Red Cross of medical supplies and also tinned or powdered milk for children in the unoccupied regions of France. Nevertheless, the primary interest of the American people, and an interest which overshadows all else at the moment, is to see a British victory. The American people are therefore unwilling to take any measure which in the slightest degree will prejudice such a victory. Before the American people would be willing to have influence exerted upon the British Government to permit the shipment of food through the British blockade to France, it would be necessary that the American people be convinced beyond peradventure that such action would not in the slightest assist Germany.

(6) In your discussions regarding the French West Indies and French Guiana you should point out that our sole desire in that region is to maintain the status quo and to be assured that neither those possessions nor their resources will ever be used to the detriment of the United States or the American republics. To accomplish this we feel that it is essential that the naval vessels stationed in the ports of those islands or possessions be immobilized and that we have adequate guarantees that the gold which is at present stored in Martinique be not used in any manner which could conceivably benefit Germany in the present struggle.

(7) I have noticed with sympathetic interest the efforts of France to maintain its authority in its North African possessions and to improve their economic status. In your discussions you may say that your Government is prepared to assist in this regard in any appropriate way.

Very sincerely yours,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

## De Gaulle from Brazzaville: Organic Declaration Completing the Manifesto of 27 October, 1940

In the name of the people and of the French Empire

In view of the law of 15 February 1872, relative to the eventual role of the General Councils in case of exceptional circumstances;

In view of the constitutional laws of 25 February 1875, of 16 July 1875, of 2 August 1875, and of 14 August 1884;

In view of the state of war existing between France and Germany since 3 September 1939, and between France and Italy since 10 June 1940;

In view of our assumption of authority and the creation of a Council of Defence of the French Empire by Ordnanances dates from 27 October 1940, in the free Territories of the French Empire;

Considering that this assumption of authority and its creation has as its goal and objective the liberation of all France; and that in consequence of this it is necessary to inform all Frenchmen, as well as foreign powers under what conditions of law and order we have taken and exercised this power.

We, General de Gaulle,  
Chief of Free Frenchmen,

Considering that all the territory of metropolitan France is under the direct or indirect control of the enemy; that in consequence, the so-called organism called the 'Government of Vichy' which pretends to replace the Government of the Republic, does not enjoy a free liberty of action, indispensable to the integral exercise of its authority;

Considering that this organization tried in vain to justify its actions and existence under the semblance of a revision of the constitutional laws, which in reality are but repeated and flagrant violations of the French Constitution;

That, without denying that a revision of the Constitution could be useful in itself, the fact of having instigated and realized it at a moment of confusion and even panic in Parliament and public opinion, is sufficient reason in itself to take away from this revision that character of liberty, coherence and serenity without which such an act, essential to the State and the Nation, cannot have a real constitutional value;

## APPENDIX V

That the President of the Republic has been deprived, without having handed in his resignation, of the rights and prerogatives of his functions;

That, under the formal terms of the Constitution of 1875, the Chamber and the Senate, sitting separately, must each vote for such revision, that only after this the proposals for the revision are to be submitted to the National Assembly, which Assembly can only hold council in Versailles;

That these simple rules considered by the principal legislators of the Republic, in particular Gambetta, and Jules Ferry, as a necessary guarantee for the enlightened consentment of the Chambers, thus avoiding hasty or perfidious revisions of the Constitution, were respected in appearance only, or were violated;

That, in reality, neither of the two Chambers or the National Assembly were able to deliberate freely, and that certain fundamental principles, treated disdainfully as 'questions of procedure' by the representatives of the so-called Government, advancing this project, were manifestly misunderstood.

That in particular a certain number of members of the Assembly were prevented from attending the ship on which they were, having been kept at sea either by order of the Government or in accord with it; that during the course of these public debates, a pressure was exercised upon the members present by the intervention of other persons with no qualifications; that in violation of the rules no official report of the meetings was published;

That the so-called National Assembly was at Vichy, whereas in designating Versailles as the seat of the Assembly, the legislator had proved that he had not considered that one would ever take advantage of the distress of a Parliament obliged to flee and dispersed by armies on the march, to convoke suddenly in a local district with the object of compelling by intimidation the manipulation of the fundamental laws of the Republic;

Considering that, if such a project of revision had been decided upon normally, the Assembly of Vichy ought by right to have deliberated its contents article by article, and have voted on the final text, which would have then become, after its promulgation, one of the constitutional laws of the country; but that far from realizing the essential object of its function, the said Assembly, relinquishing a competence which belonged rightly to itself alone, was led to make

the decision, as unconstitutional as it was senseless, to confer on a third party a veritable blank cheque, which had the effect of enabling this third party to develop and apply a new constitution;

Considering that the law of 1884 decrees that 'the Republican form of Government cannot be the object of a proposition of revision';

That, nevertheless, in spite of this solemn promise made to the nation, the pseudo-Government of Vichy which styles itself 'Government of the Republic' in view of obtaining full rights, pronounced the abolition article by article, in form as well as meaning, of the Republican Constitution;

That it prohibited by these pretended constitutional actions, even the word 'Republic' attributing to the Chief of what it called 'the French State' powers as vast as those given to an *absolute* monarch, permitting him to exercise this power for his lifetime or to transfer it to any other person chosen by him alone and even to become hereditary;

That, finally, it did not hesitate to annihilate the free rights of the people, a sacred and traditional right, by conferring on the Head of the State the permission, simply by his signature, to conclude and ratify all treaties, even treaties of peace, or cession of territory, a fact which harmed the integrity, the independence and the existence of France, of its colonies, and the countries under its protectorate or mandate;

That, frankly, the blank cheque that was delivered to this self-styled government declares that the so-called new Constitution will be 'ratified by the nation and applied by the Assemblies which it will form', but that this disposition is obviously without meaning, considering that the so-called 'Chief of State' has the choice of deciding by himself the composition of the future assemblies, as well as the forms of the ratification;

That he can delay this ratification to any future date which pleases him, even indefinitely;

That in default of a free Parliament functioning regularly, France could have made known her desires by the voice of the General Councils; that the General Councils could, by virtue of the law of 15 February 1872, and on account of the illegality of the Vichy organization, have taken over the general administration of the country, but that the said organization, by the so-called decree of 20 August 1940, forbade their reunion, and that by the so-called law of 12 October 1940,

## APPENDIX V

replaced them altogether by commissions nominated by the central power;

Considering, in summing up, that, in spite of the aggressions committed at Vichy, the Constitution remains legally in force and vigour, that, under these circumstances all Frenchmen, and especially all Free Frenchmen, are freed from any loyalty in respect to the Vichy pseudo-government, the result of a parody of a National Assembly, which ignores the rights of man and of citizen and the free disposition of the people, a government above all, whose every act proves incontestably that it is under the control of the enemy;

Considering that the defence of territories overseas, as well as the liberation of the metropolis, demands that the French forces scattered over the world should be placed without delay under a central provisional authority;

And as it so happens that the establishment of this provisional central authority cannot at present, for unavoidable reasons, be established following the conditions of the law;

That the authors of the Constitution could not conceivably have foreseen that a day would come when Frenchmen would be obliged to proceed to the formation of a government outside of continental France, that one cannot either consider creating this power under the elective system, because the details of such a system in the midst of war, and the fact that it would be essential to organize it nationally, would create insurmountable difficulties and, in any case, long delays;

That it should suffice, at the present time, that the desires of Free Frenchmen should be freely expressed without restraint or uncertainty on this subject, with the formal reservation that the provisional authority thus constituted should, as all other authority, be responsible for its actions before the representatives of the Nation, as soon as these will have the possibility of freely and normally exercising their mandate.

In consequence,

We, General de Gaulle,  
Chief of Free Frenchmen,  
the Council of the Defence of the Empire included:

Realizing that, at all points of the globe, individually and collectively, millions of Frenchmen, or French subjects, and French territories have called Us to the task of directing them in the war;

Declare that the voice of these Frenchmen, the only ones which the

#### ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

enemy, or the organization of Vichy which depends on it, has not been able to silence, is the voice of the Country and that We have, in consequence, the sacred duty to assume the charge that has been imposed upon Us.

We declare that We will accomplish this mission in the respect of the institutions of France, and that We will give an account of all our actions to the representatives of the French nation, as soon as these have the possibility of functioning freely and normally.

Ordered that the present organic declaration shall be promulgated or published everywhere that it is considered necessary.

BRAZZAVILLE, 16 NOVEMBER 1940

C. DE GAULLE

## The Question of the Tréveneuc Law of 15 February 1872 and the Liberation of France

There exists a French law which deals with the protection of the constitution and provides for the restoration of the constitutional rights to the people should they be infringed upon by usurpation of power by any political faction or by enemy occupation of the country. It is the Tréveneuc Law of 15 February 1872, framed by the National Assembly of 1871 after the military defeat and revolutionary uprisings of the preceding year.

Here is an accurate translation of the text of this law which appears to foresee the total enemy occupation of France. This law offers the only legal procedure to be followed at the time of the invasion which will provide a provisional administration for the country, as it is liberated, based on the will of the people, and at the same time guarantees that the sovereignty of the state will be restored, in due course, to the French people.

### *LAW OF 15 FEBRUARY 1872, RELATING TO THE PART TO BE PLAYED BY THE GENERAL COUNCILS IN THE EVENT OF EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES.*

*Article I.* If the National Assembly, or those which may succeed it, should be illegally dissolved or prevented from meeting, the General Councils shall have the full right to assemble immediately at the capital town of each Department, without requiring special convocation. If their customary place of assembly does not appear to offer sufficient guaranties of security for free deliberation, they may meet anywhere else in the Department. The Councils are only validly constituted by the presence of the majority of the members.

*Article II.* Until such time as the Assembly, to be mentioned in Article 3, shall have made known the fact that it is regularly and legally constituted, the General Council shall immediately provide for the maintenance of the public peace and legal order.

*Article III.* An Assembly composed of two delegates elected in secret committee by each General Council shall meet at that place where the

members of the legal government and such deputies as have been able to escape violence have reached.

The Assembly of Delegates shall not be validly constituted unless at least one half of the Departments are represented therein.

*Article IV.* This Assembly shall be charged with the responsibility of taking such urgent measures for the whole of France as may be required for the preservation of order, and especially those measures which are designed to restore to the National Assembly complete independence in the exercise of their rights.

It shall further be charged provisionally with the general administration of the country.

*Article V.* The Assembly of Delegates shall be dissolved as soon as the National Assembly has been reconstituted by the assembly of the majority of its members at any point in the territory of the country.

If this reconstitution can not be accomplished within one month after the extraordinary events, the Assembly of Delegates shall decree an appeal to the nation for general elections.

The powers of the Assembly of Delegates shall cease on the day that the new National Assembly is constituted.

*Article VI.* The decisions of the Assembly of Delegates shall be executed under pain of forfeit, by all public officers, agents of authority, and commanders of the public force (military, naval, and police forces).

The validity of this Law has never been questioned, but, on the contrary, has many times been affirmed. The most striking illustration of this is shown in the now famous joint letter of 9 September 1942 from Jeanneney, president of the Senate, and Herriot, president of the Chamber of Deputies, to Marshal Pétain. They say, 'You have nullified the General Councils which gave expression to the wisdom of every part of France and have substituted your own choice for that of the people. . . . Your plan to abolish national representation . . . you have followed it since then. At present it is no longer enough for you to have forbidden any activity whatsoever to the legislative assemblies . . . deported their bureaux. . . . You are putting an end to their very existence.

'To make the pretence, as you do, that these bureaux should have been elected each year, is to fail to say that their re-election has been prevented by you yourself in forbidding the assemblies to meet.

'If, in spite of engagements taken, you had the plan to take away



from the nation its right of freely choosing for itself its final government . . . we would have, by this letter, protested ahead of time in the name of the sovereign rights of the people.'

Since the German occupation the contingency foreseen by the Law of 1872 in which the National Assembly would be unable to meet is now a reality. Also the suppression of the Senate and The Chamber by the Vichy government is certainly an act of dissolution. Consequently both conditions of Article 1 of the Tréveneuc Law exist, justifying—in fact, demanding—the application of this Law at the liberation of France.

It will be seen by Article 1 that as a Department of France is liberated the members of the General Council of the Department 'shall have the full right to assemble immediately' and this meeting will be valid as soon as the majority of the members are present, at whatever place decided on in the Department. A further reading of the Law shows how the administration is to be enlarged as the country is liberated and finally handed over entirely to the decision of the people in the form of general elections. Consequently in applying this Law at the outset the administration of the mainland of France is left to the people whom we shall find in France, when we arrive.

Another great problem will have to be met in France: namely, the purging of administrative personnel and government officers, who after so many years of German occupation are today bound to be in varying degrees collaborators with the enemy.

The Law of 1872 allows for the purging of any such officials by the people who have stayed in France and who are consequently better able to judge correctly an official's disloyalty to the State than could anyone coming from outside. It must always be borne in mind that the General Councils, as such, are the only political bodies in France who can never be accused of having collaborated with the enemy or with the Vichy government as they were dissolved at the time of the Armistice and have not met since.

If any individual councillor personally has been sympathetic to a policy of collaboration he can be expelled from the General Council by his colleagues, a prerogative essential for all political bodies in a democratic government.

It must be constantly borne in mind in thinking of France today that because of lack of communication, transport, censorship, the entire country is broken up geographically into countless small local

groups. This gives the General Councils an even greater importance as a natural and representative means for control and administration.

Four times General de Gaulle's and the Gaullist movement's attitude towards the Law of 1872 has been affirmed. On 16 November 1940 General de Gaulle, in his Brazzaville Proclamation, which is one of the basic declarations of the Free French movement, criticizes the Vichy government for having prohibited the meeting of the General Councils and concludes 'that without a free parliament working regularly, France would be able to make known her will by the great voice of her General Councils in virtue of the Law of 15 February 1872, and in view of the illegality of the Vichy organism would even be able to provide for the general administration of the country.'

Again, in the December 1940 issue of *La France Libre* Professor Cassin, the official legal spokesman for the Gaullist movement, discusses the Law of 1872 and the powers that it vests in the General Councils. He points out the illegality of the action of the Vichy government in suspending these General Councils.

In the spring of 1943, during the exchange of notes between General de Gaulle and General Giraud while the Committee at Algiers was being formed, General de Gaulle reaffirmed that he considered the only way to ensure the protection of the rights of the French people and to guarantee order in France at the time of liberation was in applying the Law of 1872.

More recently, in the last few months, General de Gaulle stated that when he returned to France he would hand over the administration of the country according to the laws of the republic.

Nevertheless, the much discussed plan adopted by the Committee of Liberation, known as the Menthon Plan, concerning 'the constitution of the government of the Republic at the time of the liberation of Metropolitan France', is in direct conflict with the Tréveneuc Law of 1872.

Mr de Menthon has based his plan on the premise of his statement, 'we are not now in the situation provided by the Tréveneuc Law which presupposed an illegal dissolution.' This can only be construed as a deliberate misreading of the text of the law. He also says, 'Their mandate (meaning that of the General Councils) will have expired.' This assumption has no grounds by the texts of the law. But when Mr de Menthon goes as far as to say, 'The French Committee of National Liberation guarantees to exercise power immediately in liberated

## APPENDIX VI

territory. This immediate seizure of power is in conformity with the necessity of maintaining public order,' it is evident that the many declarations we have heard from Algiers of the Committee of Liberation's desire and intention to return to the laws of the republic are, indeed, cynical.

The Consultative Assembly at Algiers has not adopted the Menthon plan and is at this moment preparing a plan of its own; but, nevertheless, the Gaullist press that is held under strict censorship by the Committee of Liberation has urged the Consultative Assembly to accept this Menthon plan without discussion, saying that in so doing the Assembly will be doing its war duty like the French soldiers in Italy.

But it is difficult to understand why any new plan need be discussed or decided upon when the application of the already existing Law of 1872 covers the problem, and is the only legal procedure in existence.

If the Gaullists and the Committee of Liberation at Algiers insist, as they do, that it is only in their name that the resistance groups of France will co-operate with us, the heroic action of the French North African army in Tunisia must not be forgotten. It was not in the name of anyone or of any committee but in the name of France that 70,000 soldiers took up what were originally inadequate arms and suffered 16,000 casualties (more than the British and the Americans together). There is every evidence that we shall find in France just such courage and patriotism on an even larger scale.

How could General de Gaulle, who always most dramatically presents himself as the symbol of France, hold any objection to our adopting the Law of 1872 as our guide? In fact, he himself should maintain that any other action would be a breaking of faith with the French people.

I was in North Africa from June 1941, attached to Mr Murphy, and thus had a chance of studying at first hand the *technique de coup d'état* (agents, press, disdain shown for the premises upon which American and English recognition of the Committee of Liberation was based, the martyrdom, the xenophobia, etc.) used by the Gaullists to transform ostensibly a civilian population that certainly was not 10 per cent Gaullist before the Allied landing to being almost wholly Gaullist one year later.

In spite of the control of the press and the constant repetition on the part of the French Committee for National Liberation at Algiers

that they have a mandate from the French people, there is absolutely no proof that this is true or that General de Gaulle and the Committee would ever be accepted for even a short time as a government by the people of France if this people knew in detail the history of Gaullism. In fact, in judging the situation, the enormous difference between the point of view of forty million French within France and those outside must never be forgotten.

Therefore, in France, should we by any recognition, however defined or limited (do not forget North Africa), favour or aid, even slightly any political group to take over power in the country without the voice of the great mass of the Occupied French people being heard through the legal processes of the Law of 1872, we not only risk, but assure internal dispute amongst Frenchmen, hindering the war effort, a further weakening of France in eventual unnecessary internal disorders, and a rupture of French-Anglo-Saxon relations for the future with the grave consequences that can ensue.

Certainly in following the procedure of the Tréveneuc Law we shall be continuing our very honourable policy of never mixing ourselves up in the internal problems of other countries, above all, in those of our allies.

KENNETH PENDAR  
FEBRUARY, 1944.

## English Note to General de Gaulle on the National Committee of Free France, 26 September 1941

FOREIGN OFFICE, SEPTEMBER 26, 1941

You have been good enough to communicate to me the text of an *Ordonnance*, No. 16 of the 24th September, 1941, issued by you as leader of Free Frenchmen, setting up a National Committee, and of two decrees of the same date establishing the structure of this committee and giving a list of the names of its members.

I am happy to be able to inform you that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom are prepared to regard the Free French National Committee as representing all Free Frenchmen, wherever they may be, who rally to the Free French movement in support of the Allied cause.

His Majesty's Government will be prepared to treat with the National Committee on all questions involving their collaboration with the Free French movement and with the French overseas territories which place themselves under its authority.

In making this communication, I should make it clear that His Majesty's Government are not to be regarded as expressing any views as to the various constitutional and juridical considerations contained in these enactments.

In particular, with regard to article 6 of *Ordonnance* No. 16, while His Majesty's Government will be happy to maintain their representation with the Free French movement, they could not accredit a diplomatic representative to you or receive a diplomatic representative accredited by you, since this would involve your recognition as the head of a sovereign State.

ANTHONY EDEN

*General Charles de Gaulle.*

## De Gaulle's Wish to go back on the British-Gaullist Guarantee of Syrian and Lebanese Independence.

From *Down A Blind Alley* by Mary Borden (Lady Spears, wife of the British Minister in Beirut and Damascus), Harper and Brothers, New York, 1946.

If he (de Gaulle) recognized in his former comrade and colleague General Spears a future antagonist, it would not surprise me. Events were going to suggest plainly that he had no intention then or at any time of allowing the States of the Levant to achieve a real independence. If that was true, then the British Government's guarantee of his own proclamation must have been very irksome and the presence of his friend Spears in Beirut very galling. For he knew Spears. He was well aware that with him no bargaining and no compromise would be possible. Put bluntly, de Gaulle I believe meant to go back on his promise, he had no intention of allowing Syria and the Lebanon to slip through his fingers; if it weren't for the British it would be easy he knew to get out of the promise he'd given. But the British were tiresome and obstinate when they thought their good name was involved, and Spears was more obstinate than most. He would have to get at the British Government somehow. Political blackmail, threat to impede our war effort? Yes, there were means of doing it. But to get at the British Minister on the spot was impossible. He didn't attempt it.

If I seem to be drawing a very long bow, I can only say that what happened later bears out what I believe to have been in de Gaulle's mind at the time. That he was in a very bellicose mood was proved by a speech he made at the *Cercle de l'Union* in Beirut a day or two after we lunched with him. His audience that evening was French; no outsiders were admitted, but I listened in on the wireless from Aley and heard him say:

'It is a matter of indifference to me who wins the war as long as France wins it!'

## African Ports Offered to the United States by de Gaulle

From *The Chicago Daily News*, 27 August 1941

### U.S. OFFERED AFRICA PORTS BY DE GAULLE

*Gen. Charles de Gaulle has granted an exclusive interview to George Weller, The Daily News correspondent assigned to the Free French forces in Africa. Weller cables that the leader of Free France permitted his amazingly frank statement to pass without censorship or alteration.*

BY GEORGE WELLER

BRAZZAVILLE, FREE FRENCH AFRICA.

AUGUST 27.

'I am not keeping facts secret any longer. I have offered the United States the use of the principal ports in Free French Africa as naval bases against Hitler. I have offered them upon the basis of a long-term lease, analogous to the plan under which Britain offered her Atlantic bases to the United States.

'But I have not asked for any destroyers in return. I have asked only that the United States make use of these bases to counteract Dakar and make it more difficult for Hitler to thrust deeper into Africa, as he undoubtedly will do as soon as he is able to release some forces from Russia.'

With these words, uttered in quiet, controlled tones, Gen. Charles de Gaulle, the tall, angular George Washington of the New France, in a frank talk with this writer today revealed that he had invited the United States to take definite action to meet the Nazi threat against West Africa and South America without allowing Hitler to gain his customary first foothold.

The disclosure came as a sequel to a series of questions directed towards finding out Gen. de Gaulle's views upon the importance to the United States of bases on the west coast of Africa for protecting the Caribbean and Brazilian ingress into South America.

*(In Washington this afternoon, Secretary of State Cordell Hull disclaimed knowledge of Gen. de Gaulle's offer.)*

Speaking upon his own soil without the inhibitions natural in Cairo or London, Gen. de Gaulle predicted a Nazi invasion of that part of Africa nearest to American soil in the same uncompromising terms with which he foretold the German invasion of Syria two months before it happened and charted the blitzkrieg technique six years before Hitler launched it.

'Through a suitable intermediary, I have offered the United States, Duala, in the Cameroons and Port Gentil in Gabon, and Pointe Noire in French Equatorial Africa as naval bases,' said Gen. de Gaulle in tones so grave and composed that they added to the importance of his words.

'I always had faith that the United States would keep her word and I know that America does not covet territorial aggrandizement in Africa. Especially am I sure that France's African possessions would be in safe hands if strategic points were occupied by the American Navy. I observe that one of the cardinal points of the conference between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill was respect for the integrity of all nations. Moreover, I believe in the American conception of international honor,' said the general.

Gen. de Gaulle received the writer in the snug, cream-colored study of his villa. It was between 6 and 7 o'clock in the evening and the blinds were drawn in the window behind him, facing directly upon the Congo. The general was in a light tan uniform, without decorations except the double-barred Lorraine Cross. He had several dossiers of work upon his desk and it was evident that his lightning two-day visit for the celebration of African France's first birthday meant only more work for him.

The introduction was made by Karl Quigley of Hollywood, former driver for the American field service ambulance corps, who escaped from a Nazi prison camp after the French collapse and, instead of returning to his script writer's job, became a director of the American section of Gen. de Gaulle's African press department.

At a distance, Gen. de Gaulle's much publicized height was less perceptible because his square shoulders are as broad as a chiffonier. His frame is Anglo-Saxon in size, big without being heavy. His head is somewhat small. His thick, black hair and small moustache are very



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French and in neither his manner of speaking nor his views did he show any trace that he had been Anglicized by his long collaboration with the British middle east command. He spoke in firm French, but totally without a trace of oratorical flourish or politician's evasion and with much more simplicity and directness than is customary in public leaders.

He made no particular efforts to impress his views upon the interviewer, simply stating them in answer to direct questions with soldierly calmness and matter of factness. He gave full evidence that he understood the uses of discretion when asked to comment upon the fact that the United States was sending Col. Harry F. Cunningham here as a military observer.

'I prefer to withhold comment upon that subject,' he said.

The interviewer asked whether he believed the United States should break off relations with Vichy.

'I do,' said the general. 'Without delay. Immediately.'

Was there any hope that Vichy might, despite all evidence to the contrary, still change color and resist Hitler's orders if Britain and her allies began to gain victories?

'Not only is there no evidence, but the men of Vichy could not now turn back even if they wanted to,' said Gen. de Gaulle impassively.

'They have taken three deliberate steps, one after another, and they cannot retrace them even if they should develop a desire to do so. The first step was that they lost the military campaign. The second step was that they concluded an armistice with Hitler. The third step was that they undertook to collaborate with Hitler's plans. Those steps were separately taken and each closed a new door to retreat. They cannot turn back, they can only go farther in the same direction.'

'What would be your answer if you were accused by Vichy of bartering French African ports for United States aid?' asked the interviewer.

'My answer,' he said, 'is that there is no more reason to believe that the United States should break its word of honor and keep the French bases beyond the term of the lease or the period needed as defense against Hitler, than there was to safeguard Brest and Bordeaux against the United States in the last war before accepting American help against the same enemy.'

Asked what result he believed American severance of relations with Vichy would have upon the French, Gen. de Gaulle said:

'In my opinion the effect would be very great.'

'Does the American attitude towards Vichy then really mean so much to the average Frenchman?' asked the interviewer with a suggestion of irony which Gen. de Gaulle did not fail to catch.

'I am not suggesting that the French public is looking towards America for a cue to its political opinions,' he said. 'But at least the situation would then be clearly defined. It would be seen that America at last had taken an unmistakable line against all those helping Hitler. We know already what the average Frenchman's feelings are towards Vichy. The severance of relations would indicate to him that the American government felt the same way. Moreover, it would demonstrate that American policy towards Vichy was consistent with its policy towards Berlin.'

Asked what Vichy's reaction would be if the United States broke relations with Vichy and accepted the use of West African ports, Gen. de Gaulle replied:

'Possibly nothing very much would happen. At least, not until Germany was able to ease up in its struggle against Russia. Both the United States and Vichy would simply coast along, more or less as at present. But if you are asking about strategic considerations, that is different. Examine any map showing the route and frequency of British convoys and you will find that the most traveled path is around the bulge of Africa.

'For the protection of these shipping lanes, the Nazis cannot be allowed to use Vichy's African soil in combined airplane and submarine attacks or Britain's Middle Eastern lifeline would be severed. Britain has Bathurst and Freetown, but they are so small that Dakar easily dominates them. They are too near and weak to serve as bases.'

'Do you think the United States fleet could take Dakar?'

'Not without a battle of considerable dimensions,' replied Gen. de Gaulle. 'Near-by British ports are exposed by nature and, furthermore, they have inadequate facilities for their present needs. The same thing applies to Accra and Takoradi on the Gold Coast, and Lagos in Nigeria.'

'Then you do not believe that the United States should attempt to

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take Dakar by force at any time, but rather, that the American fleet and air arm should establish bases within the gulf of Guinea as a check upon the German advance into *Afrique Occidentale Française*?'

Gen. de Gaulle smiled faintly.

'You have grasped the reason for my offer to the United States,' he said gently.

Asked whether in his opinion the Casablanca-Dakar Railroad being built by Polish miners and veterans of the International Brigade shipped into A.O.F. (French West Africa) from French concentration camps, was what made Dakar dangerous to the United States, de Gaulle shook his head:

'Not particularly. That is just a bluff. But Dakar was the strongest base in West Africa before that and it is even stronger now. The danger to the United States, provided it falls into Nazi hands, is not somewhere in the future but imminent, immediate. It is only the lack of material that keeps Hitler from using A.O.F. and that situation is dependent only on his being temporarily unable to spare aircraft from the eastern front.'

At no time during our 45 minutes talk did Gen. de Gaulle flatly say that uniformed Nazis were already in French West Africa but he emphasized repeatedly that only substantially increased naval and air strength along the African curve could handle them if they chose to take over the established French air bases in the characteristic Nazi 24-hour style.

His manner was that of a physician quietly advising precautions against a malady.

During the course of the interview Gen. de Gaulle mentioned Jean Darlan's name only once and Marshal Pétain not at all. The writer asked if he believed that if the United States government decided to break with Vichy it should recognize Free France.

'I believe that one step ought to lead, before long, to the other,' said Gen. de Gaulle.

'If America both breaks with Vichy and recognizes your government, our people will have gone further against Vichy than Britain herself,' suggested the interviewer. 'Britain has taken the first of these steps. Should she not also take the lead in the second? Why, in your

opinion, does not London finally close the door upon Vichy by recognizing your government?’

Gen. de Gaulle answered without hesitation:

‘England is afraid. England is afraid of the French fleet. What, in effect, England is carrying on is a wartime deal with Hitler in which Vichy serves as a go-between. Vichy serves Hitler by keeping the French people in subjection and selling the French Empire piecemeal to Germany. But do not forget that Vichy also serves England by keeping the French fleet from Hitler’s hands.

‘Britain is exploiting Vichy in the same way as Germany; the only difference is in purpose. What happens, in effect, is an exchange of advantages between hostile powers which keeps the Vichy government alive as long as both Britain and Germany are agreed that it should exist.

‘If Vichy should lend or lose its fleet to the Nazis, Britain would quickly bring the suspense about recognition to an end. And if Vichy should cease serving Hitler and dismembering its empire for his benefit, Germany would herself dismantle Vichy.’

When the interviewer shifted the topic to the Pacific, Gen. de Gaulle was equally unequivocal and straightforward.

‘Free France numbers among her possessions the Islands of New Caledonia and the Hebrides. They will play an important role in the coming struggle in south-eastern Asia,’ he said.

‘Would France lend them to the United States as naval bases in case of need?’

‘Without any fuss whatever,’ replied Gen. de Gaulle simply.

Asked about the problem of their present protection, Gen. de Gaulle said:

‘If you consult a map, you will see that they lie near enough to the Australian coast so that Japan could not actually take possession of them without involving herself with Australia. But we have taken our own steps against an aggressor. We shut off the nickel and iron shipments from these islands to Japan at the same time when the Netherlands Indies did. That was a great sacrifice, considering our unprotected position.’

‘What about Japan’s seizure of Indo-China?’

‘It seems to me that both the United States and Britain badly compromised their position by taking much too light a view of that

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invasion,' said the general candidly. 'It was a mistake to treat the seizure of Indo-China in terms of threatening reprisals only if the invasion should further extend itself into Thailand. Instead, both the United States and Britain should have said outright that Japanese occupation could not be recognized as rightful, and specifically stated that as soon as a military opportunity presented itself the Indo-Chinese situation would be corrected.'

In a final question the interviewer asked Gen. de Gaulle whether Syria had given him any solution to the painful problem of giving orders to Frenchmen to fight against Frenchmen.

A quizzical look gathered upon Gen. de Gaulle's face.

'The task itself is in that way an unhappy one,' he said. 'But when I assumed this work I realized I would have to fight Frenchmen. Today I expect to be obliged to fight Frenchmen from here all the way to the very gates of Paris. I am ready to do my duty.'

## Darlan: Speech by Mr Churchill to the House of Commons in Secret Session, 10 December 1942

I will deal today with certain aspects of the considerable enterprise which we and the United States have launched in French North-West Africa, to which for convenience some months ago I gave the code name of TORCH.

On 26 August, on my return from Moscow I telegraphed as follows to President Roosevelt:

'As I see this operation, it is primarily political in its foundations. The first victory we have to win is to avoid a battle. The second, if we cannot avoid it, to win it. In order to give us the best chances of the first victory we must (a) present the maximum appearance of overwhelming strength at the moment of the first attack, and (b) attack at as many places as possible. This is an absolutely different kind of operation from the Dieppe business. There we were up against German efficiency and the steelbound, fortified coasts of France. In TORCH we have to face at the worst weak, divided opposition and an enormous choice of striking points at which to land. Risks and difficulties will be doubled by delay and will far outstrip increase of our forces. Careful planning in every detail, safety first in every calculation, far-seeing provisions for a long-term campaign, to meet every conceivable adverse contingency, however admirable in theory, will ruin the enterprise in fact.

'In order to lighten the burden of responsibility on the military commanders, I am of opinion that you and I should lay down the political data and take the risk upon ourselves. In my view, it would be reasonable to assume (a) that Spain will not go to war with Britain and the United States on account of TORCH; (b) that it will be at least two months before the Germans can force their way through Spain or procure some accommodation from her; (c) that the French resistance in North Africa will be largely token resistance, capable of being overcome by the suddenness and scale of the attack, and that thereafter the North African French may actively help us under their own commanders; (d) that Vichy will not declare war on the United States and Great Britain; (e) that Hitler will put extreme pressure on

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Vichy, but that in October he will not have the forces available to over-run Unoccupied France while at the same time we keep him pinned in the Pas de Calais, etc.'

The last of these forecasts was falsified because the French never made any resistance to the over-running of the Unoccupied Zone, but all the others have so far been borne out by events. I quote them to show how much politics, apart from strategy, were involved in our joint plan, and how we hoped to reduce bloodshed and risk of failure to a minimum by utilizing the help of Frenchmen who were then in the service of the Vichy Government. Into this scheme of things there swam quite unexpectedly as I shall presently relate the very important figure of Admiral Darlan.

I do not at all wonder that this Darlan business has caused a good deal of concern in this country, and I am glad to give an explanation of it. The question however which we must ask ourselves is not whether we like or do not like what is going on, but what are we going to do about it. In war it is not always possible to have everything go exactly as one likes. In working with allies it sometimes happens that they develop opinions of their own. Since 1776 we have not been in the position of being able to decide the policy of the United States. This is an American expedition in which they will ultimately have perhaps two or three times as large ground forces as we have, and three times the air force. On sea the proportion is overwhelmingly in our favour, and we have of course given a vast amount of organization and assistance in every way. Nevertheless the United States regards this as an American expedition under the ultimate command of the President of the United States, and they regard North-West Africa as a war sphere which is in their keeping just as we regard the Eastern Mediterranean as a theatre for which we are responsible. We have accepted this position from the outset and are serving under their command. That does not mean we have not got a great power of representation, and I am of course in the closest touch with the President. It does mean however that neither militarily nor politically are we directly controlling the course of events. It is because it would be highly detrimental to have a Debate upon American policy or Anglo-American relations in public, that His Majesty's Government have invited the House to come into Secret Session. In Secret Session alone can the matter be discussed without the risk of giving offence to our great ally and also of

complicating the relationships of Frenchmen, who, whatever their past, are now firing upon the Germans.

I hold no brief for Admiral Darlan. Like myself he is the object of the animosities of Herr Hitler and of Monsieur Laval. Otherwise I have nothing in common with him. But it is necessary for the House to realize that the Government and to a large extent the people of the United States do not feel the same way about Darlan as we do. He has not betrayed *them*. He has not broken any treaty with them. He has not vilified them. He has not maltreated any of their citizens. They do not think much of him, but they do not hate him and despise him as we do over here. Many of them think more of the lives of their own soldiers than they do about the past records of French political figures. Moreover the Americans have cultivated up to the last moment relations with Vichy, which were of a fairly intimate character and which in my opinion have conduced to our general advantage. At any rate the position of the Americans at Vichy gave us a window on that courtyard which otherwise would not have existed. Admiral Leahy has been Ambassador to Vichy until quite recently. He lived on terms of close intimacy with Marshal Pétain. He has at all times used his influence to prevent Vichy France becoming the ally of Germany or declaring war upon us when we have had to fire on Vichy troops at Oran or Dakar, in Syria or in Madagascar. On all these occasions I have believed, and have recorded my opinion beforehand, that France would not declare war; but a factor in forming that opinion was the immense American influence upon all Frenchmen, which influence of course increased enormously after the United States entered the war. Admiral Leahy is a close friend of President Roosevelt and was recently appointed his personal Chief of the Staff. The attitude of the United States executive and State Department towards Vichy and all its works must be viewed against this background.

Since we broke with Vichy in 1940, this country has had no contacts with French North Africa, or only very slender and hazardous secret contacts. The Americans on the other hand have roamed about Morocco, Algiers and Tunisia without the slightest impediment, with plenty of money and with a policy of trade favours to bestow. They have worked all this time, both before and after they came into the war, to predispose French North Africa to them, to have the closest observation of the country, to have a strong footing there and to make



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all kinds of contacts with all kinds of people, especially important military and civil functionaries. When we began to plan this expedition with them they redoubled their efforts not only to acquire information and to create goodwill but also to make a regular conspiracy among the high French officers there to come over with their troops to the Allies, should an American landing take place.

Great Britain is supposed in American circles to be very unpopular with the French. I do not think it is true, and certainly our troops have had the very best reception in North-West Africa once we got ashore. Nevertheless as we had been firing on the French on so many different occasions and in so many places, it was not worth while to contest the point. The whole enterprise therefore was organized on the basis not only of American command but of having Americans everywhere in evidence at the crucial moment of landing. If you keep in your mind the supreme object, namely the destruction of Hitler and Hitlerism, there is no room for small points of national self-assertiveness. As long as the job is done, it does not matter who gets the credit. We have no need to be anxious about the place which our country will occupy in the history of this war, nor, when the facts are known, about the part which we have played in the great enterprise called TORCH.

I now turn to examine a peculiar form of French mentality, or rather of the mentality of a large proportion of Frenchmen in the terrible defeat and ruin which has overtaken their country. I am not at all defending or still less eulogizing this French mentality. But it would be very foolish not to try to understand what is passing in other people's minds and what are the secret springs of action to which they respond. The Almighty in his infinite wisdom did not see fit to create Frenchmen in the image of Englishmen. In a State like France which has experienced so many convulsions—Monarchy, Convention, Directory, Consulate, Empire, Monarchy, Empire, and finally Republic—there has grown up a principle founded on the *droit administratif* which undoubtedly governs the action of many French officers and officials in times of revolution and change. It is a highly legalistic habit of mind and it arises from a subconscious sense of national self-preservation against the dangers of sheer anarchy. For instance any officer who obeys the command of his lawful superior or of one whom he believes to be his lawful superior is absolutely immune from subsequent punishment. Much therefore turns in the minds of

French officers upon whether there is a direct, unbroken chain of lawful command, and this is held to be more important by many Frenchmen than moral, national or international considerations. From this point of view many Frenchmen who admire General de Gaulle and envy him in his role, nevertheless regard him as a man who has rebelled against the authority of the French State, which in their prostration they conceive to be vested in the person of the antique defeatist who to them is the illustrious and venerable Marshal Pétain, the hero of Verdun and the sole hope of France.

Now all this may seem very absurd to our minds. But there is one aspect about it which is important to us. It is in accordance with orders and authority transmitted or declared to be transmitted by Marshal Pétain that the French troops in North-West Africa have pointed and fired their rifles against the Germans and Italians instead of continuing to point and fire their rifles against the British and Americans. I am sorry to have to mention a point like that, but it makes a lot of difference to a soldier whether a man fires his gun at him or at his enemy; and even the soldier's wife or father might have a feeling about it too.

It was the opinion of those officers who were ready to come over to our side that any admixture of de Gaullist troops at the outset would destroy all hope of a peaceful landing. Although we were prepared to bear down all opposition and in fact did overcome a very considerable degree of opposition, it is my duty to confess that neither we nor the Americans were looking for additional trouble, there being quite enough going about at the present time. The Americans, who, as I have said, were in command from the beginning, for their part refused to allow the slightest intervention of de Gaullists into this theatre. There was, however, one French figure upon whom our hopes were set—General Giraud—a very senior French officer who was taken prisoner before the French surrender in 1940 while fighting gallantly in a tank and who a few months ago made his second remarkable and dramatic escape from German captivity. Giraud is an undoubted hero of the French Army. General Juin, who commanded the important Algiers Garrison and Army Corps, was ready to act as his lieutenant. From our point of view there was nothing wrong with General Giraud. We therefore, at General Eisenhower's request, sent a British submarine under the American flag to cruise off the French Riviera coast and on the night of 6 November, two days before the

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dawn of zero, we picked up the General, took him out to sea, transferred him to a seaplane and brought him to Gibraltar where he arrived on the afternoon of the 7th. We all thought General Giraud was the man for the job and that his arrival would be electrical. In this opinion General Giraud emphatically agreed and he made the most sweeping demands for plenary authority to be given to him as supreme commander-in-chief of all the forces in or ever to be brought into North-West Africa. Some hours passed in persuading him to reduce these claims to the bounds of reason.

Under the influence of General Juin, Algiers surrendered on the evening of the 8th. By the afternoon of the 9th General Clark had established Allied Advanced Headquarters there. Here was found Admiral Darlan, who had been in our hands though treated with all consideration since the day before. He had come back after his official tour to visit his son who is said to be dying.

The landing at Casablanca was proceeding very slowly in the face of obstinate opposition. Large numbers of ships crammed with troops were lolling about outside the range of the forts and the U-boats were arriving on the scene in ever increasing numbers. On four days out of five off Casablanca the surf is too great for landing on the beaches. The Americans had hitherto been astonishingly favoured by fortune in the weather, but it might have broken at any moment, and, if so, the greater part of the armada off Casablanca would have had to crowd into the Bay at Gibraltar or go on cruising about in the open sea among the U-boats. Although Oran capitulated on the 10th the landing facilities there would have been wholly insufficient to deal except very slowly with double the force which we had already assigned for it. Indecisive and protracted operations in this area would have put a peculiar stress on Spain whose interests were affected and whose fears and appetites alike might easily have been excited. It was therefore of the utmost importance to bring the fighting at Casablanca to a close as soon as possible. Of course, looking back on all these events after they have turned out right, it is not easy to recall how hazardous they looked to us, to the American Chiefs of the Staff or to General Eisenhower beforehand and while they were going on. The United States might have lost 10,000 to 20,000 men drowned by U-boats apart from the fighting on the beaches and the fire of the harbour batteries.

Moreover the need for speed in the whole campaign was intensely felt by us all. Morocco and Algeria were only stepping-stones to the

real prize which is Tunisia, which held and holds the key to the Central Mediterranean. To get eastward with the utmost rapidity was only possible if the French would not only cease fighting, but would abstain from sabotaging railways and roads and actively assist in unloading the ships. Delay in getting eastward would give the Germans the time to fly and ferry over a powerful army and every day lost might mean a week's heavy fighting with thousands of extra casualties. This was the situation on the 10th with which General Clark at Algiers and his superior General Eisenhower at Gibraltar had to deal.

All the high French authorities in Tunis, Algeria and Morocco, had been invited to Algiers, and most of them had complied. Darlan, Giraud, Juin, Noguès, Chatel, and various others were gathered. Admiral Esteva, in whom we had great hopes, was held in Bizerta by the enemy. These Frenchmen wrangled together in the most bitter manner. But under the vehement pressure of United States' General Clark for a decision one way or the other, Giraud and all the other French authorities present agreed to accept Darlan as their leader and custodian of the mystical authority of the Marshal and the honour of France. Darlan, although virtually a prisoner, at first refused to do anything but eventually, late in the afternoon, he agreed to accept General Clark's terms and to send orders by air to stop all French resistance to the Allied forces. All fighting at Casablanca thereafter ceased, though whether as the result of Darlan's order is not known, and the heavy American disembarkations began. The provisional emergency agreement made in these circumstances by General Clark and Admiral Darlan was approved, for what it was worth, by General Eisenhower. This was the beginning of the relationship with Darlan.

Next day, the 11th, another great event occurred. Hitler over-ran Unoccupied France in the teeth of the protests of the venerable and illustrious Marshal. This constituted a breach of the armistice. The French officers considered themselves released from its conditions. All bets were off. There was a new deal. It could be said that the venerable and illustrious Marshal was no longer a free agent. His authority was therefore even more clearly held to reside in Admiral Darlan. Darlan was the only authority plainly derived from Marshal Pétain. General Giraud could not claim that authority. He had left France without the permission of Marshal Pétain and even, as was suggested, breaking his written promise to him. The remarkable thing

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is that General Giraud was himself impressed by the arguments of the other Frenchmen. He was quite soon convinced that he had no power whatever to influence the decision and, more than that, he seems to have felt himself at a disadvantage compared with these other Frenchmen who could prove they had obeyed the orders emanating legally from the Head of the State.

On the 13th General Eisenhower, with Admiral Cunningham, arrived at Algiers from Gibraltar for the first time and began more formal conversations with General Clark, Admiral Darlan, General Giraud and other French high officers. His object now was not merely to obtain a cessation of resistance but to bring the whole French military and administrative machine actively over to our side.

On the 14th he telegraphed to the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington under whom he is serving that he had reached an agreement with the Frenchmen; that they would accept only Darlan's leadership and that Darlan would co-operate with the Allied army. The main point was that General Eisenhower recognized Admiral Darlan as the supreme French authority in North-West Africa. This was not a treaty. It was an arrangement made by the American commander-in-chief in the field with the local authorities to facilitate the safe landing of his troops and the eastward movement of his army. Not only all the American generals but Admiral Cunningham, who knows the Mediterranean from end to end and who had been in the TORCH enterprise for several months, and also the representatives of the Foreign Office and the State Department who were present, strongly urged acceptance of the subsequent written agreement by their Governments. All the French forces and officials came over to our side, thus relieving the Americans of the anxieties and difficulties which a forcible taking over of the administration of these vast regions would have imposed upon them and us, and of the still more imminent risk of sabotage of our communications to the eastward. Giraud was appointed by Darlan commander-in-chief and hastened to rally the French troops to their new allegiance. The French garrison in Tunis, who had made no resistance to the German landings, which had already begun there, marched out of the city to the westward and took up positions facing east against the Germans. Fraternization ensued between the British, American and French soldiers. The populace, whose sympathies were never in doubt, but who in some places seemed sunk in coma and in bewilderment, became enthusiastic,

and the whole enterprise proceeded with speed and vigour. So much for what happened on the spot.

In these emergency transactions His Majesty's Government had not been consulted in any way; nor did we know the details of all the violent events which were happening. The decision which the President had to take was whether to disavow or endorse what his general had done. He backed him up. The question before us was whether we should repudiate General Eisenhower at the risk of a very serious break with the United States. I have no doubt whatever that we should have been very careless of the lives of our men and of the interests of the common cause if we had done anything of the kind. However, on November 17 I telegraphed to the President in the following sense:

'I ought to let you know that very deep currents of feeling are stirred by the arrangement with Darlan. The more I reflect upon it the more convinced I become that it can only be a temporary expedient justifiable solely by the stress of battle. We must not overlook the serious political injury which may be done to our cause, not only in France but throughout Europe, by the feeling that we are ready to make terms with the local quislings. A permanent arrangement with Darlan or the formation of a Darlan Government in French North Africa would not be understood by the great masses of ordinary people whose simple loyalties are our strength.

'My own feeling is that we should get on with the fighting and let that overtake the parleys, and we are all very glad to hear that General Eisenhower expects to be able to order the leading elements of our First Army to attack the Germans in Tunis and Bizerta in the course of the next few days.'

On this the President a few hours later made the statement to his Press Conference which was published and gave so much general satisfaction. To me he telegraphed at midnight on the 17th the text of the statement he had just given out at his Press Conference:

'I have accepted General Eisenhower's political arrangements for the time being in Northern and Western Africa. I thoroughly understand and approve the feeling in the United States and Great Britain, and among all the other United Nations that in view of the history of the past two years no permanent arrangement should be made with Admiral Darlan. People in the United Nations likewise would never understand the recognition of a reconstituting of the Vichy Government in France or in any French

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territory. We are opposed to Frenchmen who support Hitler and the Axis.

'No one in our army has any authority to discuss the future Government of France and the French Empire. The future French Government will be established – not by any individual in metropolitan France or overseas – but by the French people themselves after they have been set free by the victory of the United Nations. The present temporary arrangement in North and West Africa is only a temporary expedient, justified solely by the stress of battle.

'The present temporary arrangement has accomplished two military objectives. The first was to save American and British lives on the one hand and French lives on the other hand. The second was the vital factor of time. The temporary arrangement has made it possible to avoid a "mopping up" period in Algiers and Morocco which might have taken a month or two to consummate. Such a period would have delayed the concentration for the attack from the west on Tunis, and we hope on Tripoli.

'Every day of delay in the current operation would have enabled the Germans and Italians to build up a strong resistance, to dig in and make a huge operation on our part essential before we could win. Here again, many more lives will be saved under the present speedy offensive than if we had had to delay it for a month or more. It will also be noted that French troops under the command of General Giraud have already been in action against the enemy in Tunisia, fighting by the side of American and British soldiers for the liberation of their country. Admiral Darlan's proclamation assisted in making a "mopping up" period unnecessary. Temporary arrangements made with Admiral Darlan apply, without exception, to the current local situation only. I have requested the liberation of all persons in Northern Africa who had been imprisoned because they opposed the efforts of the Nazis to dominate the world, and I have asked for the abrogation of all laws and decrees inspired by Nazi Governments of Nazi ideologists. Reports indicate that the French of North Africa are subordinating all political questions to the formation of a common front against the common enemy.'

It seemed to me that these statements by the President safeguarded what I may call the long-term policy, and we should do very well to rest upon them. I must however say that personally I consider that in the circumstances prevailing General Eisenhower was right, and even if he was not quite right I should have been very reluctant to hamper or impede his action when so many lives and such vitally important issues hung in the balance. I do not want to shelter myself in any way behind the Americans or anyone else.

Now how far are we committed to Admiral Darlan? There is no doubt that if you ask for a man's help and he gives it in a manner that is most valuable to you, on the faith of an agreement entered into amid dangers which are thereby relieved, you have contracted a certain obligation towards him. I do not want the House to have any illusions about this. Both Governments had undoubtedly the right to reject General Eisenhower's agreement with Admiral Darlan, but in view of what had happened it is perfectly clear that a certain obligation had been contracted towards him. More than that, we had benefited greatly from the assistance we had received. I do not consider that any long-term or final agreement has been entered into. I do not consider that the agreement is a document to be interpreted by legalistic processes. It is a question of fair dealing, and of this General Eisenhower is in the first instance the judge. He states that he does not consider that he is in any way bound permanently to Admiral Darlan. He claims that he has the sole right of interpretation. Darlan and the other French leaders are certainly in his power, and I for my part hope that he will interpret his obligations in a reasonable and honourable manner, even to a man like Darlan.

Since then events have moved at a gallop. The American and British armies, several hundreds of thousands strong, with all their complicated and ponderous tackle have now landed and are in control of the whole of French North-West Africa, an area of over 900 miles long from west to east, with the exception only of the twenty or thirty miles of the Tunisian tip on which the Germans and Italians are endeavouring to build up an array and where the Germans are desperately and vigorously resisting. The whole French Army and administration are working wholeheartedly on the side of the Allies. It is much too late for their leaders to turn back now. We need their aid, but they are in our power. The French troops have fought well on two occasions. On the first 600 of them repelled a German attack without yielding an inch of ground although they suffered twenty-five per cent casualties. On the second, supported by United States artillery and some parachutists, they destroyed a German battle group at Faïd and took the position together with 100 prisoners, mostly German. They are guarding a long line from about forty miles south of the Mediterranean down to the Tripolitanian Frontier, holding back the German and Italian patrols and pressing forward as far as their strength allows towards Sfax and Gabes. As our troops



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come up we shall reinforce them strongly. Meanwhile Admiral Darlan succeeded in bringing the whole of French West Africa including the key strategic base of Dakar to our side against the enemy. I asked the President whether I might refer to certain secret telegrams and I have just received the following from him:

'You might add from me if you wish that General Eisenhower has definite instructions from me to enter into no agreement or bilateral contract with Admiral Darlan, but that all decisions by Eisenhower shall be unilateral on our part, and shall take the form of announcements from the military commander-in-chief to the fact that Dakar instead of being a menace is today open to use by British and American ships and planes in the prosecution of the war.'

The advantages of Dakar coming over are enormous, and saved us a costly and perhaps bloody expedition. We are to have all the facilities of the port. The United States deal for us in the matter; they have adopted the claims the Admiralty made and we are to share with them all these facilities. The powerful modern battleship *Richelieu* can go to the United States to be completed. Other French vessels are being formed into a squadron which obeys the orders of Admiral Darlan. Darlan is actively endeavouring through his emissaries to persuade Admiral Godfrey, who commands the French squadron interned in Alexandria Harbour, and is paid by us, to come on our side. So far he has not succeeded but we are hopeful. Questions of honour appear to be specially complicated in this case.

All this is done in the sacred name of the Marshal and when the Marshal bleats over the telephone orders to the contrary and deprives Darlan of his nationality, the Admiral rests comfortably upon the fact or fiction, it does not much matter which, that the Marshal is acting under the duress of the invading Hun, and that he, Darlan, is still carrying out his true wishes. In fact if Admiral Darlan had to shoot Marshal Pétain he would no doubt do it in Marshal Pétain's name.

While all this has been going on, Admiral Darlan was naturally somewhat affected by the President's outspoken declaration and other statements which reached his ears. It may be of interest to hear a letter which he wrote to General Clark. We are not called upon to approve or sympathize with his position, but it is just as well to understand it.

'Monsieur le General,

Information from various sources tends to substantiate the view that

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

"I am only a lemon which the Americans will drop after they have squeezed it dry."

'In the line of conduct which I have adopted out of pure French patriotic feeling, in spite of the serious disadvantages which it entails for me, at the moment when it was extremely easy for me to let events take their course without my intervention, my own personal position does not come into consideration.

'I acted only because the American Government has solemnly undertaken to restore the integrity of French sovereignty as it existed in 1939, and because the armistice between the Axis and France was broken by the total occupation of metropolitan France against which the Marshal has solemnly protested.

'I did not act through pride, ambition nor calculation but because the position which I occupied in my country made it my duty to act.

'When the integrity of France's sovereignty is an accomplished fact – and I hope that it will be in the least possible time – it is my firm intention to return to private life and to end my days, in the course of which I have ardently served my country, in retirement.\*

During the last summer I have established close and friendly relations with General Eisenhower. I do not think I can give a better general picture of the situation than the latest message which he has sent to me. It was dispatched on December 5:

'In the political field it is easily evident that our war communications system has not served us well in trying to keep you fully informed. This has been aggravated by the fact that difficulties in censorship here have permitted rumours to go out that have no foundation in truth. Among these stories is one that the American military authorities are dealing with Darlan about matters that have nothing to do with the local military situation, and are supporting his claims to a permanent authority rather

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\* Here a passage referring to de Gaulle was suppressed, the gist of which was as follows: After saying he had lived for 35 years in sympathy with an abstraction called France, in which he still believed, Mr Churchill added that the Government had done all it could to help de Gaulle, but that France was something greater than any of her political leaders. He had been distressed by the anti-British tone of de Gaulle's remarks in the summer of 1941, above all by an interview he had given in Brazzaville when he claimed that: 'What in effect England is carrying out is a deal with Hitler, with Vichy as go-between.' He praised de Gaulle for refusing to abandon hope in 1940, but was unwilling at that stage to place the political future of France in his hands alone, preferring to base the final decision on the will of the entire French people

## APPENDIX X

than as merely the temporary head of the local Government. Nothing could be farther from the fact. Admiral Cunningham, Mr. Mack, Brigadier Whiteley and other British officers are kept closely and intimately informed of all moves made, both in our local dealings with Darlan and in the weary process we have been going through in straightening out the Dakar tangle. At every meeting with Darlan, I tell him that so far as this Headquarters is concerned, he is at the head of a local *de facto* organization by means of which we are enabled to secure the co-operation, both military and civil, that we need for the prosecution of this campaign. He knows I am not empowered to go farther than this. I assure you again that we are not entering a cabal designed to place Darlan at the head of anything except the local organization. Here he is entirely necessary, for he and he alone is the source of every bit of practical help we have received. If you will contemplate the situation existing along our lines of communication, which extend 500 miles from here through mountainous country to Tunisia, you will understand that the local French could, without fear of detection, so damage us that we would have to retreat hurriedly back to ports from which we could supply ourselves by sea. Giraud quickly gave up trying to help us and it was only through Darlan's help that we are now fighting the Boche in Tunisia instead of somewhere in the vicinity of Bone or even west of that. It appears to us that both Boisson and Darlan are committed irrevocably to an Allied victory. . . .

'The military prospects depend upon several factors of which the most important is our ability to build up fighter cover for our ground troops. This, in turn, depends upon getting supplies, establishing forward fields and maintaining a rapid flow of fighter craft until the battle is won. It depends also upon weather, until we can get steel mats on all our mud fields. The next thing we must do is to get forward every available scrap of ground reinforcement and replacements for troops now in the line, who need a short rest. In addition we must get our communication lines to work so well that all ground and air troops will be assured of adequate reserves when more intensive fighting starts again. The third great factor is our ability to prevent rapid reinforcement by the enemy. Our bombing fields are now so far removed from targets that the scale of our air bombing is not what we should like, but we are doing our best. Finally, during all this we must provide adequate protection for our land and sea lines of communication, especially our ports. All these jobs strain our resources and keep everyone going at top speed, but we shall yet get them done. But all this shows you how dependent we are upon French passive and active co-operation and, so far, we have no evidence of reluctance on Darlan's part to help us.

It is very necessary that the two Governments and, if I may say so, the President and I keep very closely together, as we are doing. After

all, what is it we want? We want the maximum possible united French effort against the common enemy. This I believe can be achieved but it can only be achieved gradually and it will best be achieved by the action of Frenchmen. If Admiral Darlan proceeds to render important services he will undoubtedly deserve consideration in spite of his record, but that consideration gives him no permanent claims even upon the future of the French possessions which have rallied to him, still less upon the future of France. The Germans by their oppression will soon procure for us the unity of metropolitan France. That unity can now only take an anti-German form. In such a movement the spirit of the Fighting French must be continually in the ascendant. Their reward will come home on the tide. We must try to bring about as speedily as possible a working arrangement and ultimately a consolidation between all Frenchmen outside the German power. The character and constitution of Admiral Darlan's Government must be continuously modified by the introduction of fresh and, from our point of view, clean elements. We have the right and I believe we have the power to effect these necessary transformations so long as Great Britain and the United States act harmoniously together. But meanwhile, above all, let us get on with the war.

I must say I think he is a poor creature with a jaundiced outlook and disorganized loyalties who in all this tremendous African episode, west and east alike, can find no point to excite his interest except the arrangements made between General Eisenhower and Admiral Darlan. The struggle for the Tunisian tip is now rising to its climax and the main battle impends. Another trial of strength is very near on the frontiers of Cyrenaica. Both these battles will be fought almost entirely by soldiers from this island. The 1st and 8th British Armies will be engaged to the full. I cannot take my thoughts away from them and their fortunes, and I expect that will be the feeling of the House of Commons. The House will, I believe, feel that it is being well and faithfully served by His Majesty's Government. I ask them to support us in refusing to do anything at this juncture which might add to the burdens and losses of our troops. I ask them to give their confidence to the Government and to believe in their singleness and inflexibility of purpose. I ask them to treat with proper reprobation that small, busy and venomous band who harbour and endeavour to propagate unworthy and unfounded suspicions and so to come forward unitedly with us in all the difficulties through which we are steadfastly and successfully making our way.

## Open Letter from General Eon, of the French Army, to General de Gaulle

General de Gaulle, I want to transform the mere note which follows into an open letter.

You remember no doubt that an old soldier is in London, where he came in 1940 in response to your appeal?

On seeing your conduct towards many Frenchmen—those whom you cast into the street because they did not think the same way as you—this soldier has been obliged to study your character.

This is the conclusion that he been forced to make:

You are concealing within your conscience the desire to use the misfortunes of your country in order to establish your dictatorship over France;

You forget the necessities of the war;

Each time you speak to the French people you disguise your real thoughts. You deceive them;

Already, it is said, you are having the oath of loyalty taken to you: Dare you deny it? This oath must be made known to all French people. Here is the wording of it:

'I swear to recognize General de Gaulle as the only legitimate leader of the French and to exert myself in earning him recognition by using, if necessary, the means and methods employed against the Germans.'

You are preparing civil war.

I have decided to address this second open letter to you after listening to your last appeal on the radio, on Friday, 26 March 1943.

In this appeal you said:

'Our Duty is National Union.'

But afterwards you spoke as a 'Sovereign'. A sovereign going to inspect his domains, paying a visit to his General in Chief. . . . Then you launched a plan of inspection, whereas you are not acquainted with Africa and know nothing about its peoples.

Is this a search for Unity?

Yes, France demands Union. She demands more.

She wants the unanimity of all her sons.

France awaits one gesture from you, General de Gaulle:

ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

'That you should return to your place in the fight, with the rank you possess, immediately, and in silence.'

This gesture would achieve union, it would achieve unanimity.

If you bring about this unanimity as a true servant of the Country—by rejecting for ever your absurd dreams of dictatorship—I shall be glad to retract what I am saying.

I beg you to believe in my devotion to France,

GENERAL EON, of the French Army

EON

LONDON, 28 MARCH 1943

## To My Children

*In captivity, at Königstein  
January, 1941*

I do not know how long I shall stay here, perhaps months, perhaps years. It is possible that I may be buried beside my friend, Dame. No matter, I am ready for anything. To you I entrust the responsibility of taking my place in the sacred task of France's restoration. I forbid you to resign yourselves to defeat, and to accept a fate for France like that of Italy, Spain, Denmark, or Finland. The means are not so important. The goal is the essential thing, and everything must be subordinated to it. To it you must sacrifice your personal interests, your tastes, your theories, your faith.

In the beginning, there is no need of making a frontal attack on the enemy, who is entrenched on our soil and has totally disarmed us. Stresemann has demonstrated the method for us to use and we have only to copy it intelligently.

Of prime importance is the liberation of our territory inside the frontiers which have been given to us.

Then, physical, moral, and social reconstruction:

- (a) To bear children. To help those who have them.
- (b) To raise them as they should be raised—for France.
- (c) To assure each family its place in the sun.

In the third place, to be ready, at any moment, to take advantage of the opportunities which will be offered us, if there is still any confidence in us. By this means to re-establish a modern army instantaneously. This assumes that we shall adopt the right kind of programme.

From this distance, I propose the following principle:

The spiritual requirements are fulfilled in France.

The training is carried out in the colonies.

The material is obtained from abroad.

In spite of all the surveillance, such a programme is possible, providing it is camouflaged. Nothing resembles military experience so much as scouting experience. Nothing resembles a military aeroplane so much as a transport plane. A tractor on caterpillar treads only needs armour to become a tank, etc., etc.

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

But, above all, the spirits of our people must be equal to their task. They must wish to be French, completely.

Nobody should exile himself from the occupied or temporarily cut-off territory in order to preserve French thought abroad.

On the other hand, nobody should hesitate to exile himself if the possibility is offered to him abroad to be useful to France.

All of you, Pierre, Henri, André, Bernard, and you, my dear daughters, remember that the storm passes but the mother country remains for ever. A nation lives when it wishes to live. Tell this to everyone around you. Compel the others to think as you do, to work as you do. We are sure of success if we really want it.

Resolution—Patience—Decision

H. GIRAUD



## Henri de Kerillis Invites General de Gaulle to Come to the United States\*

The representatives of occupied and conquered countries were seen passing through Washington. The Queen of Holland, her daughter, Princess Juliana, the Kings of Norway, Greece and Yugoslavia, the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, the Presidents of the Polish and Czechoslovakian Republics, the President of the Belgian Council were all, once or often, guests of the White House. General de Gaulle did not put in an appearance. The Americans told him ten times that he would be received with pleasure. An assistant Secretary of State in the State Department authorized me to send him myself the unofficial invitation of the American government. General de Gaulle refused with arrogance. He demanded to be 'recognized' and treated as a head of state. To my letters of entreaty he did not reply, or replied in substance that America had committed offences against him which were too serious.

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\* *De Gaulle Dictateur*, by H. de Kerillis

## Protest to Pétain and Laval from Jeanneney and Herriot, 9 September 1942\*

We learn in the *Journal Officiel* of your decrees that the bureaux of both houses of Parliament cease their functions 31 August. That act is in contradiction to your engagements. In July 1940, to obtain a vote of full powers by the National Assembly, you promised through Pierre Laval that the Chambers would not be suppressed. Your Constitution Act of 11 July 1940 stipulated that the Senate and Chamber should continue until new assemblies provided by a new constitution were ready. But by the same Act you adjourned the Chambers and decreed that they could meet again only when you convoked them. (*Here part of a sentence was missing from the dispatch.*)

Now, not content to have forbidden any legislative activity, you have suppressed all the prerogatives of the members of Parliament. You have deported the Chambers from Vichy to Châtelguyon. (*100 words censored here.*)

You now want to terminate their existence. You pretend that the Chambers should have elected officers every year, but you omit to state that you have prevented their renewal by failing to convoke the Parliament. You recognize the legality of the parliamentary bureaux by decreeing their removal to Châtelguyon. Can you say that the bureaux lose their reason to be when the assemblies no longer sit?

Your own Keeper of the Seals, Barthelémy, replies to you implicitly on page 525 of his treatise on constitutional rights of 1933: 'Bureaux do not disappear during the interval between sessions.' There is no doubt that bureaux must exist as long as assemblies exist. Only those charged by the assemblies with mandates have the quality to act for them. But you have faced us with a *fait accompli*. We can only accept. But you must realize that we republicans shall not stay silent against this new attack on republican institutions. (*Some material censored here.*)

You have put the brakes on the essential rules of our civil and penal rights. You have substituted unlimited dictatorship for guarantees that

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\* This is not the complete text, which unfortunately I have been unable to trace

#### APPENDIX XIV

all civilized nations grant to accused persons. You have re-established *lettres de cachet*. The French are ready to accept any sacrifice to repair the national disaster. They will accept any necessary discipline but they will keep their faith in the institutions of liberty. The National Assembly at Vichy gave you your full powers. The government of the Republic, under the authority and signature of Pétain, promulgated in one or more decrees a new constitution of the French State. Furthermore, it specified that the constitution be ratified by the national and applied by the assemblies it created. Whether you like it or not, the National Assembly gave its mandate to the government of the Republic. The mandate is violated when you try to eliminate the essential institution of the Republic. The mandate is violated in that not only has the word 'Republic' disappeared from the *Journal Officiel* and the front of public buildings, but everywhere you have abolished the principle of elective representation.

Such acts are more than misuse of power. No government can bear the mandate of a parliament if it ceases to be a government of a republic. We cannot clearly see your aims, but if, despite your solemn engagements, you intend to deprive the nation of the right to decide for itself freely its definite régime, or if without authorization of Parliament you try to draw France into war against our allies, which you yourselves declared 'honour forbids', we, by this letter, protest in advance in the name of national sovereignty.

The great and imminent danger is that liberty cannot be regained without those convulsions which, in truth, it is your duty to avoid. All the time talking union, you have never ceased excluding Frenchmen from the French community. You have molested many. You have mutilated municipal assemblies that are the heirs of secular and communal traditions. You have wiped out General Councils that reflected the wisdom of our provinces and you have substituted men of your own choice.

Your pretension now to deprive us of titles that do not depend on you but upon our suffrage cannot reflect our total devotion to France or our attachment to democracy, which we refuse to disavow.

HERRIOT  
JEANNENEY

## New York *Herald Tribune*, June 6, 1942

### FRENCH TO ISSUE NEW DE GAULLIST PAPER IN BRITAIN

*La Marseillaise* to appear June 14 as 66th foreign war periodical in London.

by Eric Hawkins.

LONDON, June 5th

Almost coinciding with the second anniversary of the fall of France, a new French newspaper, *La Marseillaise*, will begin publication in London June 14, it was announced today. It will be published weekly and will be the 66th foreign wartime publication appearing in the British capital.

*La Marseillaise* will reflect directly and officially the views, policies, and interests of the Free French movement, it was revealed, and will be edited from Carlton Gardens, General Charles de Gaulle's headquarters in London. Theoretically, it will be designed exclusively for the fighting forces of France and in this sense it will be a French counterpart of the *Stars and Stripes*, published for the American forces in Great Britain.

It will, however, be distributed without charge, part of the agreement with British authorities being that it will not be put on sale.

*La Marseillaise* will be the seventh French language publication edited in London. Of the sixty-six publications representing directly and indirectly the views of the United Nations and the free governments established here, Poland has twenty-one, Czecho-Slovakia fourteen, Belgium seven, Austria six, Russia, Denmark, Holland, Belgium and Norway two each and Greece one.

Many of the publications are assisted by funds from the British Ministry of Information or the British Council. Few are self-supporting, and lack of funds has caused some of the periodicals to cease publication after a good start. Shortage of paper has been another cause of their disappearance and also has compelled a number of original dailies to be converted into weeklies and weeklies into fortnightlies and monthlies.

Of the daily newspapers supporting the Allied cause, the most

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important is *France*, which, it was explained today in connection with the forthcoming appearance of *La Marseillaise*, in no way officially represents the de Gaullist government. Contrary to widely held belief, *France* is an independent paper giving strong support to General de Gaulle as a military leader and giving prominence to every Free French activity, but maintaining no political attachment.

*La Marseillaise* Attack on Herriot and Jeanneney

LONDON

Laval has just suppressed not only the Chamber of Deputies themselves, but the offices of the Assemblies, which means that M. Jeanneney and M. Herriot are now nothing. To be frank, for the last two years they have not been very much.

The President of the Senate and the President of the Chamber of Deputies are therefore without jobs, 'on relief' so to speak. I must confess that their plight leaves me unmoved for two reasons. The first, because neither one nor the other showed, during the crucial and decisive hours when their authority could have helped the country, that force of character which commands respect. The second, because the republican strain which I inherited from peasant ancestry, and a postman father, is not upset by the slight fracas made by the collapse of one of the last remnants of a régime already rotten long before its final shameful end, and which M. Jeanneney and M. Herriot had themselves abandoned on 10 July 1940.

For to speak truthfully, there was the National Assembly of Vichy. And it was therefore the Republic of these gentlemen which was in question and also the Republic of France. They knew the conditions of the armistice. They knew that Alsace-Lorraine had been immediately torn apart from us, and they kept silent.

Brought up in the palace, and being great dignitaries, they knew down to their finger tips, as did Pétain, Laval and Marquet and '*tutti quanti*' all about the plot that unfolded before their eyes. They knew that the constitutional acts drafted by M. Alibert, whose co-helpers demanded the vote, overthrew the Republic and confiscated its liberties, and they remained silent.

Neither one nor the other took this occasion to unmask the traitors. Neither one nor the other demanded a statement of accounts. Neither one nor the other breathed a word to a fairly strong opposition, which in the final counting was able to muster 80 votes, and which perhaps at the call of one or the other might have been turned into a majority.

Neither one of them, knowing they were defeated, pronounced words of vengeance which, while it does not remedy the crime, or

prevent what follows, does not let the people be swept by the deluge and delivered without a word to its enemies. Neither one or the other uttered that cry to which a humiliated people could anchor its pride. A cry echoing from its own heart which could have saved its honour and its soul, and would have assured the continuance of its destiny.

In all our history books they had put, these great republicans, an engraving representing Beaudin falling from the scaffold in '48. But they were not Beaudin, nor did they share his risk.

And since then what have they done? I know very well that it is not possible for everyone to derail trains, or to throw bombs. But Ledru-Rollin and many others accepted exile. We who are nothing, and who, once the country is given back to itself, shall ask, after our sufferings, only for peace for those who are nothing. We who often were not of their clan, hoped for this exile, for a very simple reason it is true—to fight. But during all this time, they, like Candide, 'cultivated their garden'.

Because the obscure multitude from which we come resists, it has created an optical illusion and a logomachy of the Resistance. From the moment an official personage does not do harm to France, or from the moment he goes under cover, it is said that he 'resists'. A strange pessimism this, that demands of its vested representatives only the immobility of any oyster glued to its shell.

They also say that if Laval has enforced his decree, it is because he is afraid of an initiative such as the convocation of the Chambers on the day the Allies land in France. Well, it is possible that we may see them arrive before our own volunteers—these important volunteers who, like trout, have been kept for so many months shivering with fear in the shade.

It can even happen that this new France, which is finding herself through suffering, will go through the malady of youth, and in the exuberance of her new-found liberty may give a provisional confidence to some of those who have ill served her. But will this matter? The future, the great future, and stability are still far away.

It is also said that among the majority of Frenchmen, quarrelling has ceased; not only the divisions caused in regard to Germany and Vichy, but that men who opposed each other in former days, meet now with mutual aspirations. This is true. And these two statements are not contradictory.

The prostration of the first months having been overcome, the

sorcery of old Marshal Pétain aired, French people regrouped themselves. Quite naturally, and as nothing else had been proposed to them, they frequently drifted back to their former affiliations. But what did every one of these sporadic penitents, spread to the four corners of France, do? Well, they agitated the already existing feeling against party orthodoxy which begins to unravel, thread by thread.

What does this mean? It means that a revolution is under way. Traditional etiquette indicates other ways of accomplishing this, and it is not certain that the same etiquette always brings the same results.

To deduce consequences from this fact is impossible. Political predictions of the French problem have been for a long time uncertain, outside of a few fixed principles and indisputable premises, such as the establishment of a Republic, and the restoring of liberty. Only these facts of social and economic order are on solid ground, because they are known, and because the fact that we neglected them was the cause of our disaster, because also they are in the soul of everyone and correspond to pressing needs, and, lastly, because they are the original thoughts and dominant occupation of all revolutions.

There is no problem more pressing than the one of reconciling France with her workers, or one more urgent than to give French agriculture a position where it will no longer be a luxury of the State, or a despised means of livelihood for the worker.

The work being done by the constituents is vast, and of permanent value. But the first shock that caused the spark was a social shock: the collision of the people with the nobles. And the first gesture was the abolition of feudal rights, on the night of 4 August. After this, all that was left of the monarchy was swept out like straw.

This is why, when I heard of 'rejuvenated institutions' I am sceptical. To undertake the reconstruction of France on this political basis, to which a form of conservatism still clings, would risk opening the doors to chaos.

To remove the seat of M. Jeanneney from the Luxembourg, and put it in the Palais Bourbon in place of M. Herriot's armchair, or vice-versa, is not enough of an innovation to satisfy a new France. And this is why I fear that in this France of which I speak, M. Jeanneney and M. Herriot will continue to be without a job.

F. QUILICI



## Statement of the Five Members of the French Chamber of Deputies now in the United States

*For Release Monday Morning,  
14 September, 1942.*

The five members of the French Chamber of Deputies now in the United States belonging to various political parties from the left and the right have issued the following statement in connection with the letter addressed by M. Jeanneney and M. Herriot to Marshal Pétain.

The five French deputies at present in the United States associate themselves whole-heartedly with the courageous declaration made against the Vichy government's abuse of power by Messrs. Jules Jeanneney and Edouard Herriot, President of the Senate and of the Chamber of Deputies.

Their forceful protest proves the illegitimate and arbitrary character of this government. The acts it performs do not bind France, which at present lacks a regular government.

The undersigned deputies—convinced that they are expressing the opinion of the great majority of their colleagues—are aware that Messrs. Jeanneney and Herriot are interpreting an opinion that is almost unanimous among the French people. In allying themselves with the two Presidents, these deputies also express the feeling of the Frenchmen scattered throughout the world, and especially of those who are at present the guests of the generous American nation.

As this is their first opportunity to make a joint statement, they are eager to express to General de Gaulle their feelings of admiration and of gratitude for the task which he has undertaken in creating and inspiring the movement of Fighting France.

PIERRE COT, *Deputy for Savoie, Former Minister.*

EDOUARD JONAS, *Alpes Maritimes.*

HENRI DE KERILLIS, *Seine.*

HERVÉ DE LYROT, *Ile et Vilaine.*

PIERRE MENDÉS-FRANCE, *Eure, Former Under-Secretary of State.*

## General de Gaulle Praises Edouard Herriot

3 October 1942

General de Gaulle in a statement made to a correspondent of the *News Chronicle* said: 'The courageous attitude openly adopted by President Herriot has today been ennobled by his being placed in prison. I salute President Herriot. In my opinion the personal ordeal to which he is subjected is a great service rendered to France and to the Republic.'

## A Note by General Giraud on the Subject of Desertions

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

HEADQUARTERS

FIRST BUREAU

*Algiers, 20 June 1943*

1. An order signed by General de Gaulle and General Giraud on 8 June 1943 stated: 'Pending the fusion of the various French Forces which, in their entirety, are to constitute the single national army, it is the duty of every man to remain at his post. It is accordingly forbidden to enlist into any unit any man who has irregularly left his previous unit or who has not yet complied with a call-up order which he has received: all secret recruitment must immediately cease.'
2. Military law is categorical on the subject. Any man leaving his unit is a deserter as soon as the period of grace has expired, even if he joins another unit under the same supreme command. A man belonging to the A.F.N. who joins the F.F.L., or vice versa, is therefore a deserter as the term is defined in military law.
3. General de Gaulle considers that men who left their unit before 7 June 1943 have not committed an offence. But military discipline and law cannot be linked to 7 June. Even if such an attitude were admissible, which it is not, the date is wrongly chosen: it would be more appropriate to select November 1942, when North Africa again took up arms against the common enemy: otherwise it means making light of our contribution to the victory in Tunisia which compelled the admiration of our Allies.
4. However that may be, desertions have continued since 7 June: they have been especially frequent in Algiers and in Tunisia. While a certain number of men wish to join the F.F.L. on their own initiative, the majority are contacted and urged by civilians or by soldiers of the F.F.L. to desert. Between 10 and 15 June, more than 150 men on leave from the 7th R.C.A. alone were subject to repeated attempts at enticement. They reported the matter to the commander of their unit. Enlistment has continued since 7 June; in particular, by a certain

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

Major O'Cottreau. The enlistment of men presenting themselves on 14 and 15 June was antedated before 7 June. It is therefore certain that General de Gaulle's orders are not being obeyed.

5. No enlistment of deserters into a unit after 7 June is permitted. I note, however, that none of the deserters has been sent back to his unit by the F.F.L.

6. We have not accepted a single deserter from the F.F.L., and a number of them have been sent back to the F.F.L.

7. Please note that certain deserters made off with American motor vehicles. None of these has been returned. In such cases, desertion is compounded with the theft of military equipment.

8. The Army must be powerful and disciplined. I mean to employ every means of achieving this aim. It would be a disaster for the cause of France if this form of poaching were to continue. It is time that strict orders were given to the F.F.L. and to civilian bodies and that these orders were carried out.

9. On 19 June, a soldier of the F.F.L. was arrested while attempting to entice men at the Marguerite Barracks, Algiers.

GIRAUD  
*Army General,  
Commander-in-Chief*

Report of the General Staff of the French Army in July 1943, and Communicated to the British and American Governments Dealing with Desertions Instigated by Gaullist Agents in the French Regular Army in North Africa.

Gaullist propaganda continued by all methods, in accordance with the technique set out below, and forced the Commander-in-Chief to take a series of preventive and punitive measures: the organization of road-blocks and sentry posts at certain cross-roads, searches by the police for clandestine recruitment centres, etc. . . . During these operations an assembly camp of 600 deserters was discovered on 17 June, in a well-disguised farm near Algiers, which served as an illegal depot for Gaullist soldiers: the camp was surrounded by troops and the deserters sent back to their units.

All these measures, which extended progressively over the whole of North Africa, in accordance with the orders of Admiral Muselier, assistant to General Giraud, slowed up the rate of desertion which was in fact threatening to increase in geometric progression. But they did not reduce the zeal of the Gaullist agents, nor the illegal activity of the officers of the Free French Forces, an activity which proves the obvious wish of General de Gaulle not to meet his obligations.

Further, legal proceedings were taken against recruiting officers contravening French law.

*Technique of the propaganda inciting soldiers to go over to the Free French Forces*

This very active and insidious propaganda is carried out on one side by members of the Free French Forces, and on the other by civilian recruiting agents (men and women) attached to recruiting offices which are usually clandestine.

(a) *Direct action by the Free French Forces*

Long before the end of operations in the Tunisian sector, the Free French Forces had tried to incite soldiers of the regular army to go

over to their ranks. In particular members of the Leclerc army, operating in liaison with the troops of General Delay, commanding the East Sahara front, had received the order to entice as many men as possible. It was in this way that on 30 April 1943 soldiers on leave from the Leclerc army and a Gaullist officer who had come especially for this purpose by lorry from Metlaoui, took away with them six European soldiers from the 1-13th R.T.S., stationed in the Metlaoui area.

A large number of soldiers from the Free French Forces—privates, non-commissioned officers and officers—were sent from May onwards, with leave passes, to the largest garrisons on Algerian territory where their principal activity was to maintain close contact with members of the regular forces, in the army, navy and air force, with the purpose of rallying them to the Free French Forces. These men, who were on so-called leave, and were in reality recruiting agents, were able, thanks to the many motorized vehicles that they had brought with them, to convey rapidly towards Tunis the men whom they had been able to convince. The latter were probably re-grouped, in the first place, for the purpose of clothing them and providing them with false identity papers in one or more clandestine recruiting centres.

Taking advantage of the fact that the regular army had been ordered to lodge them, feed them and give them all hospitality, the soldiers of the Free French Forces used all methods in their power to incite the regular troops to desert.

On many occasions it was reported that members of the Free French Forces, transferred to General Catroux's mission, had caused Senegalese infantry-men of the 1-13th R.T.S., entrusted with the guarding of the mission, to desert. Further, Gaullist officers or agents who organized desertion usually escaped from inquiries or summons by the regular army authorities because they belonged to the General Staff or to General de Gaulle's own staff and lived in the neighbourhood.

(b) *Action by civilian recruiting agents*

A network of clandestine recruiting offices, which had already been prepared a long time in advance, was discovered in North Africa, notably in Tunisia and the *département* of Algiers.

A great number of civilian agents, which included women, undertook to urge soldiers from the regular armies to join the Free French Forces. Assembly points, which changed each day, were established in order to collect the deserters together secretly, by lorry, at a fixed

## APPENDIX XX

time. It was in this way that on 7 June 1943 sixty or so members of all different branches of the forces who had been assembled in Algiers, near the Bois de Boulogne, ready to embark, were arrested by the police.

Among the clandestine recruitment centres, special mention should be made of the reception centre 'Combat', situated in the Place de l'Opéra in Algiers. This combined reception centre and club, which in principle was reserved exclusively for the use of men on leave from the Free French Forces, served in reality as a central recruiting bureau; it is mentioned by almost all deserters who have been arrested as being the starting point of their desertion.

The action of these recruiting agents was mentioned as being exercised in every place frequented by the troops, in the street as well as in bars or even the Catholic centre or club open to the soldiers of the regular army. Women belonging to various classes of society also undertook to spread intense propaganda among troops and their officers, approaching men directly in the streets or working with those who frequented the soldiers' club or centre.

### (c) *Procedure and methods of propaganda used*

All methods and arguments likely to rally men and officers (European or native) to the Free French Forces were employed with a great deal of skill and psychology, it must be said, by the Free French Forces and their male and female recruiting agents.

#### (a) Arguments of a material order:

Good joining-up bonuses (25,000 to 30,000 francs).

High rates of pay.

Rapid promotion, even immediate admission to higher rank.

#### (b) Arguments of a moral order:

The prospect of serving in units equipped with modern armaments, to be called into action very soon.

Promises made to the Senegalese Infantry to be sent back home at once (an argument very likely to influence the natives of French Equatorial Africa).

The promise that they would have no reprisals to fear following their desertion.

#### (c) Practical procedures:

Distribution of false leave passes and false papers to allow escape from searches.

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

### *Results obtained by Gaullist propaganda*

The total number of desertions caused by the Free French Forces or their civilian recruiting agents in Algeria alone stands today at 2,750, composed as follows:

Army	2,000
Navy	250
Air Force	500

Since Gaullist propaganda, in spite of their efforts, has only obtained mediocre results among the men, they are trying to influence the higher ranks. Very recently a general officer was sounded in vain and invited to join the Free French Forces with immediate promotion. Further, leaflets containing extremely violent attacks on the regular army and its leaders, and threats against those who do not rally to the only possible Leader, General de Gaulle, were placed in the letter boxes of many officers and non-commissioned officers.

### *Conclusion*

The present situation, 1 July 1943, may be summed up as follows:

The measures taken by General Giraud, measures of a strictly defensive order, have effectively slowed up the start, and the rate of desertion is quite clearly on the decline. But there is a great deal of unrest in the army and great anxiety about the future, since the press—which is controlled almost entirely by de Gaulle—celebrates every day the activity of La France Combattante, its leader, the exploits of its soldiers, and now keeps silent about the military feats of the regular army in Tunisia.

If the efforts of the Gaullists were to succeed, the result is fated to be a fratricidal war between the two armies. In fact, from the moment when the assets of one are reduced more or less to the level of the other's, two military forces of comparable strength would find themselves face to face; first, the regular army, deprived of its most ardent and patriotic anti-German elements, but still constituting an anti-Gaullist force and thrown back even into Pétainism through exasperation at the extremist spirit. The second, composed of an ultra-Gaullist core which has attracted the refugees from the regular army and operating under a leader who is determined to triumph by any means possible.

It is superfluous to stress the catastrophic consequences that such a situation would have for France and the Allies.



## Open Letter to President Roosevelt from France (*Bir Hakeim*, October 1943).

*BIR HAKEIM*  
OCTOBER 1943—NO. 6

*One Leader only; De Gaulle.*

*One Fight only; For Our Liberties.*

Open Letter to President Roosevelt and the People of France:

### A CRY OF ALARM!

We believed and hoped that the sad events which we are now witnessing, costing so many of our people their lives, would put an end, once and for all, to the base political intrigues which for years have done so much harm to the people of France. This is why *Bir Hakeim* was the first organ of the clandestine press to welcome the Algiers agreements which thus allowed hope for the speedy reuniting of all French people. We thought, in fact, that everyone over there had taken his place without reservation—having disposed of the more or less reactionary projects—round him who, for us, remains a symbol and who, on 18 June 1940, launched over the radio from London an appeal which at once became historic.

From the start this appeal was ours, since for us it was the expression of the Republic, that is to say it aimed at the re-establishment of the rights of the people and the victories of the working class.

Now, we know that certain leading members of the Committee of Liberation subscribe in varying degrees to the elaboration of a future reactionary plan, and this is precisely why we do not accept—we who belong to the inner resistance—and will never accept a government which could admit within itself the 'opportunists' and the 'chameleons'—former collaborationists. Now, and henceforth, we wish to state the whole truth, so that the entire population of France, warned of the grave danger which is already taking shape, can, from today, unite more closely round the internal resistance movements, in view of the final cleaning up of the House of France immediately after the liberation of the territory.

The people of France will never, absolutely never, be able to hold out their hands to Pétain, Laval, Déat, Luchaire, Henriot and their clique, as General Eisenhower did yesterday to Darlan, on the day when American soldiers landed in Africa.

At the very moment when we thought that all the collaborationists of the liberated Empire were packing their bags in order to flee to unknown destinations, we learnt that in Algiers, our second Paris, men like Peyrouton, Boisson and their ilk, were displaying themselves.

At the very moment when we were shouting, with so much warmth in our hearts, 'Long live Roosevelt!' and 'Long live de Gaulle!', the opportunists of Vichy, who had left in good time to reach Algerian soil, were welcoming the armies of the Liberation with duplicity and cowardice equal to the haste with which they had greeted the armies of Hitler and Mussolini immediately after the occupation of our territory by barbarous hordes.

We are telling you this, Mr President—with as much sincerity as our courageous colleague and friend *Le Franc-Tireur*—with all the respect and affection that the whole of France holds for you and because we cannot accept any longer, without uttering a CRY OF ALARM, these dirty, low intrigues. We are aware of the noble loyalty of the great people of the United States and of him whom to the acclaim of free peoples it has elected three times as its leader. Your good faith, Mr President, is being shamelessly exploited by the Vichy fifth column which, through the intermediary of Chautemps, traitor to France and traitor to his party, has applied itself to spreading the Pétainist lie around you. We are telling you very clearly, Mr President, what the entire population of France is really thinking.

The whole of France is behind de Gaulle and not behind the others, for to us, Pétain is Bazaine.

It lies not with us to reproach you, Mr President, for letting yourself be led astray by this treacherous propaganda. Alas! This crooked propaganda has deceived us too. Where Frenchmen have been taken in it is not surprising that Americans have been led astray. You have only heard, Mr President, those who were able to speak, the Pétainists; the voice of a handful of traitors has drowned the voice of the people.

You are being deceived, Mr President, and we are uttering a CRY OF ALARM to you because it is our right and duty. Those who produce this newspaper, from the editors to the most modest French workman or peasant, who conscientiously distribute this resistance

newspaper, including the linotype operator and the photo-engraver, risk their lives every moment of the day since they are hounded by the German Gestapo and the Gestapo of Pétain. You cannot believe, Mr President, you will not believe, that those who wish to make themselves heard by you in the name of the French people can be deceiving you!

By means of this letter, by means of this CRY OF ALARM, we are telling you, Mr President, 'THE FRENCH PEOPLE ARE THIRSTING FOR HONESTY!' They are tired of being sold and they have had enough of it. The entire people of France turns to you, as brother to brother.

This modest leaflet, in which you will feel our mortal anguish, is being printed in a dungeon, for this is what the soil of our country of liberty, our own, has now become for us. Will it reach you? We hope so, and we shall do everything to that end; in this case we are certain that it will go to your heart for you are a great man in love with LIBERTY.

As a result, *Bir Hakeim*, a fiercely republican organ, has decided today, regretfully, to reveal to the people of France what lies beneath the Algiers talks, with the sole aim of causing our liberty and the one and indivisible FOURTH REPUBLIC to triumph.

We are not fighting Hitler, Mussolini and Franco today in order to facilitate the installation of a more or less totalitarian régime tomorrow. Since we are taking part in bloodshed, we shall go on to the end, solely so that the generation who are growing up can live, once and for all, in perfect peace and that PEACE between PEOPLES can at last be assured for ever.

#### PEOPLE OF FRANCE, HERE ARE THE FACTS:

We know that Washington continues to support—while concealing the truth from its splendid people—the candidature of a senior military leader of the Committee, against that of de Gaulle, for the following reasons:

The formation in France, after the arrival of the Anglo-American troops, of a government preserving the guiding principles of Pétain's national Revolution, perhaps even maintaining the latter in power; France would then be in charge of a regent whose authority would be upheld by a Legion from which Darnand would be excluded, but its leader would be Bousquet who has discreetly nursed his relations

with Admiral Leahy. Pétain would be the symbol of national reconciliation after the elimination of Laval and his entourage. All the partisans of Vichy, apart from the supporters of Laval, would thus introduce the allied armies into France. They would say to the liberators: 'Come in then! We have behind us the Clergy, the great Banks, the top industrialists, and we now have only one enemy, bolshevism.' In this way Pétain's dictatorship would be concealed beneath a government of national renovation to which the old lags would belong: men like Flandin, Pomaret, etc. . . . thus saving at the same time the life of men such as Laval, de Brinon, etc.

The same situation would exist in Spain and Roumania. Austria, reunited with Bavaria, would be governed by Prince Otto of Hapsburg. Germany would be led by Dr Schacht. As for Italy, after the final removal of Mussolini, the monarchy would be preserved, supported by a government which would include Grandi, Cavallero, Taon di Revel and Senator Volpi.

The Queen Mother of Belgium, during her visit to the Vatican, is said to have obtained from the Pope—who should only concern himself with celestial affairs—the promise that he would give his entire support to the plan in question.

We know that Pétain is delighted, of course, by this plan. The principal meetings of the conspirators take place at Vichy. Jardel represents the trusts, Pietri brings the support of Franco and Salazar. But in order to introduce Laval they are waiting courageously for . . . the arrival of the Allies. With a certain irony Pietri calls this the 'Changing of the Guard'. In Ankara, Bergery is doing his best in support of this arrangement. But he is not strongly enough in favour of the clergy. On the other hand, the Germans are watching him, for they are afraid he may leave for Africa. Bergery's wife, who is American, preserves contact with the American ambassador.

There is support in Switzerland for this vast project. On the Swiss side it really seems that Pilet-Golaz, who favours the Germans, is strongly in favour of it. On the French side, the most ardent protagonists are Admiral Bard, Dumoulin de la Barthète, Gilloin, Pomaret, the Comte de Leusse (father and son) and what remains of the diplomatic and consular service from Vichy. On the American side, the commercial adviser Reagan, who seems to be the leader of the American team, has been entirely won over to the cause of synarchy!

Let us say next that, very fortunately, 'Gaullism' has shown its

great strength in North Africa, as well as on the French mainland, and it is becoming progressively clearer that all the base international manoeuvres to establish the more convenient authority of the leader in question are kept in check. The hesitation—perhaps, unfortunately, provisional—of men like Noguès, Peyrouton, Boisson, etc., is the justification for this. This does not mean that the very senior people who, in Washington, have become their supporters, are discouraged as a result. Very much the contrary, they remain convinced that by using force—cutting off food supplies and refusing armaments to the army—they will bring Gaullist resistance to an end. They will only give arms to the French Army which from now on is in the hands of Giraud alone. Military co-operation by good Frenchmen in the liberation of their country interests them less, it seems, than the possibility of installing a conservative régime, the only guarantee for the success of all the magnificent business deals which the ‘synarchy’ propose for themselves in order to make victory a concrete fact. Washington, contrary to the wish of the Resistance movement in France, demands the total subordination of de Gaulle to the leader in question and there are serious reasons for fearing that, if our supporters in Algeria were to relax their vigilance, an ‘accident’ might occur which would definitely settle the matter in accordance with the wishes of the synarchy!

### PEOPLE OF FRANCE!

You can see that the new broom which will energetically sweep the HOUSE OF FRANCE clean immediately after the liberation must be handled in a vigorous manner by men of unswerving decision. We must place all our confidence in the communists—they will not forget—and hope that all the resistance groups remain in close agreement among themselves and with them. It is clear that, without Russia—which seems, and understandably so, to want to proceed alone—the war would have been definitely lost a long time ago. We know that this great country, which is more and more likeable, follows all these disgusting intrigues carefully, and we can say—for we have good reasons for thinking so—that its decisive support will be there at the right moment, you may be sure of it. Thanks to Russia, in particular, we shall be able to create in our country a true State socialism and reconstruct France to be clean, republican, healthy and vigorous.

We know also, from other sources, that our British friends take no

interest whatever in this 'grand plan'. They have understood where the feelings of the great majority of Frenchmen lie and are convinced of the total failure of this vast reactionary project.

We know also that the 'synarchy' fears the vindication of popular judgment and that its negotiators are taking advantage of a neutral country (Switzerland) to work fervently for 'a compromise peace', allowing the survival of a Germany sufficiently strong to preserve western Europe, at least, from Russian influence.

Every Frenchman therefore will not understand the reason for the deep concern which still persists in Algiers, in the midst of the Committee FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION, as well as the 'grand plan' which consists, in short, of not allowing the PEOPLE to regain their GREAT LIBERTIES and, what is more, to stop their progress towards a good standard of living at the cost of the landed classes.

And in fact what would be the use of driving out the enemy if they remained among us under cover of ideologies in their image? What would be the use of driving out Hitlerism if we accept solutions which are more or less Hitlerian? The enemy must be mercilessly pursued in the realm of ideas just as on the field of battle—*this war is first and foremost a revolutionary war.*

Our task is the defence and glorification of an order in which man, delivered from the slaveries of the totalitarian state, finding his true personality again, will at last be able to develop in the intoxication of freedom. What we have to maintain, we Frenchmen, and you, Americans and British, is the civilization of total liberty, our civilization, our communal country.

It is important that we should be worthy of our martyrdom, of the destiny which collects all nations together in the ebb tide of misery such as this.

For these reasons *Bir Hakeim* is in the service of France and the fraternal nations, it is in the service of mankind. If it is true that a kind of Hitlerism lies dormant in every political regime, that a Nazi Germany lurks in every ideology, in this case *Bir Hakeim* raises here, beneath the sign of the *LIBERTY OF THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE* the barricade of intellectual vigilance, the barricade of the MIND.

BIR HAKEIM

1943.—D.—No. 465.

*IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE.*

King's Bench Division.

Folios 23.

Writ issued the 6th day of August, 1943.

Between—

Maurice Henri Dufour—Plaintiff

—and—

General Charles de Gaulle

Lieutenant-Colonel André Passy

Captain Roger Wybot

Captain François Girard

Colonel Louis Renouard

Major de Person (Male),

Major Etienne Cauchois and

Major Pierre Simon

Defendants

STATEMENT OF CLAIM

1. The Plaintiff is a French national at present residing in England. The Defendant General de Gaulle is or was at all material times the Leader of the Free French Forces. The other Defendants are members of and officers in the Free French Forces employed therein by the Defendant General de Gaulle and serving him; and each of the acts hereinafter alleged as done by each of them was done in the course of such employment and service.

2. On 2nd September 1939, the Plaintiff was mobilized with the French Army, wherein he then held the rank of sergeant. On 1st May 1940, he was appointed an *aspirant* or cadet. Thereafter he fought in the Battle of France and for deeds of valour therein was awarded the *Croix de Guerre* and made a *Chevalier* of the Legion of Honour. On 23rd June 1940, he was severely wounded in the region of the kidneys and taken prisoner by the Germans. On 1st November 1940, six months having then elapsed since his appointment as *aspirant*, the Plaintiff, in accordance with French military regulations, automatically became a *sous-lieutenant*.

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

3. On 13th March 1941, the Plaintiff was released by the Germans on account of his wound and was sent to a hospital in France from which he was discharged on 7th June 1941. He was then employed by the Vichy Government at an internment camp in what was then unoccupied France. While so employed he came into contact with the British Secret Service, by which he was employed in certain activities, and it became necessary for the Plaintiff to escape from France. He left France on 15th February 1942 and arrived in England on 28th March 1942.

4. In April 1942, the Plaintiff reported at the headquarters in London of the Free French Forces and was interviewed by the defendant General de Gaulle. On 11th May 1942, the Plaintiff signed a document described as an *acte d'engagement*, whereby he purported to engage himself to serve in the Free French Forces for the duration of the war. The said *acte d'engagement* is invalid under French law. The Plaintiff never in fact served in the Free French Forces.

5. On 18th May 1942, the Plaintiff was requested to proceed to 10 Duke Street, Manchester Square, W.1., which is the headquarters of the *Bureau Central Renseignements Affaires Militaires* of the Free French Forces. The Defendant Lt.-Col. Passy is or was at all material times the officer in command of the said Bureau and the Defendants Capt. Wybot and Capt. Girard served under the Defendant Lt.-Col. Passy in the said Bureau. On or after 18th May 1942, the said three Defendants wrongfully conspired together to procure from the Plaintiff information to which they were not entitled concerning his said activities with the British Secret Service, and for this purpose to assault, beat, imprison and otherwise maltreat and injure the Plaintiff. Each of the acts hereinafter alleged as being done by the Defendants Capt. Wybot and Capt. Girard was an overt act in the said conspiracy. The Defendant Lt.-Col. Passy was at all material times well aware of the commission of the said acts and caused and permitted the same to be done.

6. The Plaintiff arrived at the said Bureau at 2.45 p.m. on 18th May 1942. From 3.00 p.m. until 6.30 p.m. on the said day the Plaintiff was interrogated by the Defendant Capt. Wybot about his activities. Thereafter, after an interval of about 2 hours, during which he was kept in the custody of 2 French soldiers and given no food, he was again interrogated from 8.30 p.m. until about 10.30 p.m. by the Defendants Capt. Wybot and Capt. Girard and other officers in the Free



French Forces, whose names the Plaintiff does not know; during this interrogation the Plaintiff was kept under a bright light. At about 10.30 p.m. the Plaintiff was directed to strip to the waist, which he did. The Defendants Capt. Wybot and Capt. Girard then struck the Plaintiff with their fists repeatedly in the face and beat him across the small of his back with a steel rod bound in leather, striking him particularly in the place where he had been wounded as aforesaid thus causing him a severe pain and suffering. They threatened to kill him and threatened also that a girl with whom he was friendly and who was then serving in the British F.A.N.Y. Service would be raped, saying 'We have arrested Mlle. Borrel and we shall make her speak by whatever means are necessary even if we must rape her one after the other.' They continued to treat the Plaintiff in this manner until about 3.00 a.m. on 19th May, when he was taken down to a cellar in the basement of the premises at 10 Duke Street aforesaid.

7. The Plaintiff was confined in the said cellar from 19th to 29th May 1942 inclusive. The said cellar was about three metres in length and two-and-a-half in width. It had no furniture, no light and little ventilation. It was so low that the Plaintiff could only just stand up at one end. During this period the Plaintiff was brought up nearly every night, and interrogated, beaten and maltreated by the Defendants Capt. Wybot and Capt. Girard in the manner hereinbefore described.

8. On 29th May 1942, the Plaintiff was removed in custody to an office of the Free French Forces at Dolphin Square. Before being taken there, he was told by the Defendant Capt. Wybot that he would be there required to sign a second *acte d'engagement* and that he was to do what he was told. The Plaintiff did in fact sign a second *acte d'engagement* whereby he purported to engage himself to serve in the Free French Forces for the duration of the war. The said *acte d'engagement* is invalid under French law. Further and alternatively, the same was in the premises signed by the Plaintiff under duress and is in any event null and void.

9. The Plaintiff was then sent to the Free French Forces camp at Old Dean Park, Camberley, where, except for an interval from 17th July until 17th August 1942, during which he escaped and was at large, he was imprisoned from 23rd May until early in December 1942. His imprisonment as aforesaid was effected by the Defendant Major de Person, the officer in command of the said camp, pursuant (inter alia) to an order given by the Defendant, Col. Renouard, the officer in

command of the Free French Land Forces in Britain, in or about the beginning of June 1942 and to a *mandat de dépôt* dated 10th July 1942 signed by the Defendant Major Cauchois and countersigned by the Defendant Major Simon. From and after 29th May 1942, the four Defendants named in this paragraph, conspired together to imprison the Plaintiff as aforesaid and each of the acts alleged in this paragraph was an overt act in the said conspiracy.

10. In the beginning of December 1942 the Plaintiff escaped for the second time from the said camp and is now residing in London.

11. By the Allied Forces Act of 1940 and orders made thereunder the Defendant General de Gaulle is invested with certain powers over members of the Free French Forces for securing discipline and internal administration. The Defendants or some of them claim that the Plaintiff is a member of the Free French Forces and have requested the British authorities to arrest the Plaintiff. Unless restrained by this Honourable Court, the Defendants will arrest the Plaintiff or cause him to be arrested, and will again imprison him.

#### AND THE PLAINTIFF CLAIMS:—

##### 1. Against all the Defendants:

- (a) A declaration that the Plaintiff is not and never has been a member of the Free French Forces within the meaning of the Allied Forces Act of 1940 or the Allied Powers (War Service) Act of 1942 or any others made under either of the said Acts or otherwise subject to the jurisdiction or authority of the first Defendant.
- (b) An injunction to restrain the Defendants and each of them, their servants or agents from arresting or detaining the Plaintiff or causing or permitting him to be arrested or detained.

##### 2. Against the Defendants General Charles de Gaulle, Lieutenant-Colonel André Passy, Captain Roger Wybot and Captain François Girard damages for assault and false imprisonment and for conspiring to assault and falsely to imprison the Plaintiff.

##### 3. Against the Defendants General Charles de Gaulle, Colonel Louis Renouard, Major de Person, Major Etienne Cauchois and Major Pierre Simon damages for false imprisonment and for conspiring falsely to imprison the Plaintiff.

PATRICK DEVLIN.

APPENDIX XXII

Delivered the 6th day of August 1943, by Thomas Cooper & Co. of 71,  
St. Mary Axe, in the City of London, Solicitors for the Plaintiff.

1943.—D.—No. 465

*IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE*

King's Bench Division.

DUFOUR

v.

DE GAULLE AND OTHERS.

STATEMENT OF CLAIM

Thomas Cooper & Co.,  
71, St. Mary Axe,  
London, E.C.3.

‘The Truth About de Gaulle’ by H. G. Wells  
(*World Review*, May 1943).

The Oxford University Press sends us *The Speeches of General de Gaulle*, done into English by some unknown hand. We have read them with the greatest interest and have even gone so far as to compare them with various documents in French emanating from the same source and not, we gather, intended for the English reader. In the introduction to the Oxford University Press publication we find an account of the state of the French mind in mid-June 1940 that does not tally very precisely with our record of the facts. It declares that ‘only two voices spoke to France’. One admitted defeat, and the other, that of de Gaulle, was a ringing call for intense patriotism under the symbol of the Counter Reformation, the double cross of Lorraine, the romantic France of Joan of Arc and Gilles de Rais, St Bartholomew’s Eve and everything that repudiates the great France of the Revolution. But, as Dr Johnson said long ago—I forget his exact words—any egotist careless of truth and the rights of man can resort to the extremity of patriotism. On looking up the facts, we find that in December 1939 it was not General de Gaulle but Daladier who was the loudest for patriotic unity. At the same time, *before the declaration of war*, a systematic attack was made on the Communists and Syndicalists who, distrustful of the two hundred industrialist families who ruled France, were asking for some statement of war aims. What are we going to fight for, they asked, and for whom? *That* French voice the Oxford University Press has forgotten altogether.

A systematic (and, as our experience in Britain shows, totally unnecessary) suppression and purge of these inquirers was made. M. Léon Blum protested at the arbitrary muzzling of Left opinion, but the voice of de Gaulle was inaudible. He was established as the nominal head of Free France in this country. A French Institute existed already in South Kensington and was expanded. M. Labarthe, the President of the French Society of Engineers, was appointed Director General of the French services in England connected with armaments and scientific research, while Vice-Admiral Muselier was appointed Commander of the Free French naval and air forces.

Sooner or later English public opinion must realise that, in his pose as the symbol of national unity, General de Gaulle has quarrelled with and denounced this Institut Français, Muselier, Labarthe and practically everyone who does not accept his direction. His conception of French unity, and the French will, has narrowed down until its sole representative is himself. He becomes more and more manifestly a 'leader' who has succumbed to the temptation of his position and got out of hand.

Like all liberal-minded Englishmen, I have a profound and affectionate admiration for France, the France of the great Revolution, and for the exemplary lucidity of the French mind at its best. I detest imperialism and reactionary nationalism whether it is French or British. I find the best analysis of the French malaise in the works of Anatole France whom I have recently re-read from start to finish. How fine-spirited they are! The military training at St Cyr is alien to the finer French mentality. It has imposed a class of narrow-minded and out-of-date officers, ruthlessly competitive among themselves, woodenly pious and patriotic, and quite heedless of their country's role in the reconstruction of human affairs. The military inefficiency of the British at the outset of the war was largely due to a similar out-of-date class professionalism. The French people have not had the British opportunities for a frank criticism of their situation, and the world is perplexed by the violent struggles of the army caste to usurp control of a gagged people.

In another book\* de Gaulle betrays his quality and objectives more plainly than he does in these very meticulously selected speeches. It seems designed to build up a de Gaullist mentality in the infantile French mind. It is printed in black, red, blue, green and yellow, and on the cover we see de Gaulle (and no other St Cyr man) in a cloak of heroic magnificence, mounted, not on a 1938 tank as one might have expected, but on a red spotted horse with a green mane, leading the marshalled forces of France.

It begins with de Gaulle already recognisable as a little boy—an only child apparently, though I am told he has brothers—listening on the hearthrug to the stories of a venerable grandfather and a middle-aged father of the previous invasions of France, '*belle, fertile et paisible*'. To endorse the '*paisible*' quality, the toys on the hearth-

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\* *Général de Gaulle: Chef des Français Combattants*, Nash. (Hachette.) 5s

rug are soldiers and a cannon. At school our hero is instructed by his father, who has come to Paris as a teacher, and whose patriotic bias is indicated by a large map of La France behind him. Next we see a tall exemplary figure standing alone before the instructor's blackboard at St Cyr, where he learnt all that was necessary to become '*un officier accompli*'. On 4 August 1914, still solo, he departs for the front amidst great popular enthusiasm. The other St Cyr men were, I suppose, hanging back.

We see him wounded and on a stretcher. (No other wounded in sight.) He is displayed rallying his men to a counter attack and '*grièvement blessé*' by an '*obus de gros calibre*'—it had to be '*gros*'—on the stricken field. Consequently the rally fails. He is picked up by a German ambulance and taken to Germany. All this is told as if nothing of the sort had ever happened to any other human being. Five times, says the narrator, he tried to escape and failed. One infers there must have been something defective in his tactics; probably he tried to do it alone and exhibitionism betrayed him. Five times! We have his word to prove it.

He is shown writing his ideas about modern warfare. Sublimely alone as ever, he consults nobody about it. The door is wide open, and a cunning German stands in the doorway behind him, and at a distance of several yards snapshots his thoughts. Needlessly. His ideas were easily accessible to the Germans if they wanted them without this brain photography. For how belated they were, the student need only consult Mr Ivor Halstead's *The Truth about our Tanks*.

On his return to France, 'he wished to transmit to the younger generation' the experience he had acquired '*sur le champ de bataille*'—not to mention Germany again—and he was nominated Professor of Military History at St Cyr.

Then a picture of him; all alone on a platform, handing on that fatal St Cyr tradition to the generation of French officers which collapsed so disastrously in 1939 to 1940. In 1939 the little innocents are told that the sole gleam of resistance to the invaders was made by de Gaulle! The Battle of Britain and a few other such checks to the German triumph are entirely ignored. He got away to London, where he took complete control. We are shown the effect of his proclamations upon the French common people. Everything in the way of sabotage the French did, we are told, was done by '*La France combattante, sous l'étendard tricolore à Croix de Lorraine*'. Otherwise presumably they

would have done nothing. His boats patrolled the oceans and sank hostile submarines. '*Ses avions protègent les convois britanniques*' and bombarded German towns. To which we poor, gagged English may only exclaim '*Well!*' Finally, we see the de Gaullists in North Africa '*déjouant complètement les plans de Rommel*', with no acknowledgement to any British or American co-operation—and with that, the picture book concludes.

This is the nationalist bunkum upon which a new generation of French children are to be trained for the great day of the de Gaullist plebiscite. Frankly I think that plebiscite game which Napoleon the Third brought off and Boulanger didn't, is half a century out of date. I make no suggestion that de Gaulle is not sincere. He is an artlessly sincere megalomaniac. He believes in himself to such an extent that he feels justified in any measure that will put him in absolute control of France. Across one's mind there drifts a voice out of Kenneth Grahame's immortal *Wind in the Willows*, chanting in an ecstasy of self-approval:

'The learned men at Oxford know all that there is to be known,  
They don't know half as much as wonderful Mr—de Gaulle.'

On the whole, though, I find him expensive and I would rather have the money spent upon the sort of Frenchmen who have had nothing to do with de Gaulle or anything else from that reactionary hothouse of St Cyr.

## 'L'idée Gaulliste'

From *The Economist*, 22 May 1943

Like nature, the political life of a nation abhors a vacuum. *The Economist* described last week how the *Révolution Nationale* has vainly tried to fill the void left in France after the Third Republic. The collapse of French parliamentary democracy has been followed by the failure of Pétain's pseudo-authoritarian regime. The vacuum is now being filled by what may be called the *mystique Gaulliste*. The political outlook of General de Gaulle's movement has not yet crystallized. But it is clear that there is more than a shade of a difference between what Gaullisme means inside France and what it represents abroad. Outside France, General de Gaulle now stands beside General Giraud as one of the leaders of French resistance. In France itself he is, according to all available evidence, regarded by the mass of resisting Frenchmen as *the* leader of their national renaissance. The *mystique Gaulliste* dominates the underground press of nearly all political shades; and such clandestine organisations as have been active in the daily struggle against the Germans and Vichy seem nearly all to have rallied behind the man who on 18 June, 1940, introduced himself to the French people with the words '*Moi, Général de Gaulle, actuellement à Londres*' and called on them to continue the war against Germany.

The fact that from June 1940 to November 1942, that is, during the darkest years in French history, General de Gaulle's name was the only symbol of France's will for survival and rebirth, could not fail to leave deep traces on France's political outlook. For the first time since the collapse of the Second Empire, one personality took an exclusive hold of the centre of the political stage within the *pays réel*. The *pays légal* was represented by Pétain. For more than two years, all the great issues of France's present and future were inseparably connected and identified with those two names. The political polarization of Frenchmen, between those who resisted the invader and those who did not, proceeded around them; and the political evolution of the country during the armistice regime may be described as the evolution of two *mystiques*.



*The French Crisis*

The reappearance in such strength of personal factors and motives in French political life can be understood only against the broad political background of the crisis of French democracy. Elements of that crisis were apparent in the many social and political disturbances after February 1934. In spite of all its drawbacks the French democratic system showed enough power of resilience to withstand the shocks of the thirties. It collapsed under the impact of military disaster. The collapse was thorough; and French democracy can recover only gradually from its consequences. On the morrow of the armistice, the traditional party system was smashed to pieces. The old lines of division lost any meaning. All social and political bodies were internally divided and split on the issue of war. The Right provided the leaders for the armistice regime; but it also had its Mandels and Reynauds. The same was true of the Radical Socialists. Inside the Labour movement Jouhaux and Blum stood for the war and for resistance; but Faure and Belin adhered to the *Révolution Nationale*. The old links were broken; and the new ones which gradually united resisting Frenchmen were of a non-political character. Only late in the day—during 1942—did the resisting elements of the old parties try to reorganize themselves according to some of the old political divisions. Even this, they did within the wider framework of the de Gaullist movement, which had in the meantime assumed solid shape.

The characteristic feature of the reconstituted political groupings, as far as one can judge and from the French underground press, is the lack of moral and political self-reliance. The feeling that the old parties failed and that each of them had its share in responsibility for the military breakdown is very strong. A 'sense of guilt' weighs on all attempts at the revival of the party system. This is an almost ideal background for the *mystique* of a 'strong personality.' A widespread longing for a Leader almost invariably grows from the people's own political weakness. Napoleon the First built his Empire on the exhaustion of French political energies in the process of the Revolution. Napoleon the Third drew on himself the hopes of the French people after they had been frustrated by the series of futile social collisions between 1848 and 1850. In contrast, Boulanger was a grotesque failure because the French democracy of the eighties was far too vigorous and self-reliant to long for a Leader.

The aureole which in the eyes of Frenchmen in France must

surround General de Gaulle can hardly be dismissed by references to the much-discussed shortcomings of the leader of Fighting France. To people condemned to the daily miseries and humiliations of Vichy, he necessarily appears as the personification of all the national virtues of France. His political record has not been burdened by the vices of the Third Republic. His military record serves as the pedestal from which he can look down to the incompetence and mediocrity of the older generals. His book, *The Army of the Future*, did in fact forecast the course of the Battle of France five years before the event. True, the military expert may remark that General de Gaulle was not by any means the only, and not the earliest, advocate of modern technical warfare; the pedant may point to his mistake in proclaiming the era of small and purely professional armies. But the mass of Frenchmen consists neither of experts nor of pedants; and to them General de Gaulle is, and will probably remain, the unheeded and unrecognized prophet, the 'voice in the wilderness'. General Giraud, for all his extraordinary courage, character and patriotic record, does not appeal in the same way. Militarily, he belonged to the 'old school' of Pétain and Weygand.

But this is only one element in the *mystique*. The other is the fact that General de Gaulle has secured for his movement the support of many sections of the French nation, while General Giraud has tended to stay within the narrow limits of the conservative, extreme Right milieu with which he has always been associated. General de Gaulle has the almost unconditional support of the resistant wing of the *Croix de Feu*, of the Catholic Trade Unions and of the C.G.T., of Radicals, Socialists and Communists.

How is it that all those movements, so antipathetic to one another, have recognized his leadership? Resistance is the common denominator. But this is not by itself a sufficient explanation. General de Gaulle's strength lies at least partly in the vagueness of his politics, which lends itself to the most divergent and contradictory interpretations. His supporters of the *Croix de Feu* hold that the political credo of the *Army of the Future* is still valid, a credo that was all against parliamentary democracy and all in favour of an authoritarian royalist régime. The Left keeps in mind General de Gaulle's more recent assurances of loyalty to the Republic and to the Constitution of 1875. Which of the interpretations is right? General de Gaulle's recent utterances allow no definite reply to the question. His assurances of

allegiance to the Republic have had attached to them qualifications that his critics regard as subtle clauses of escape. And his condemnation of Pétain's personal dictatorship has not prevented him from himself maintaining a strictly personal control over Fighting France, with many of the somewhat eccentric rites that go with the application of a *Führerprinzip*. One day, the pressure of events and of practical politics on French soil will clear the contradictions. In the meantime, however, in the detached atmosphere of exile—in *partibus infidelium*—contradictions need no unravelling; and the *mystique* is—like every *mystique*—growing with an element of a *malentendu* in it.

A correspondent from Tunis wrote recently that the French there 'fell in love with de Gaulle as with an unknown girl.' The comparison can be extended to describe the mood prevailing in France itself. To the mass of Frenchmen, General de Gaulle remains the symbol of French resistance. The less emotional student of political affairs looks with some uneasiness to the authoritarian lining of that symbol. In the series of meticulously polite letters exchanged between Carlton Gardens and Algiers, some notes of a strange nationalist egocentricism can hardly be missed. But it would be a fallacy to believe that the growth of the *mystique* could at this stage be prevented or hampered by any artificial devices or by the fostering of any rival myths. The only effective reply to the *mystique* can be provided by the wholesome political prose of a liberated and free France. The *mystique* has grown out of the temporary collapse and sense of inferiority of French democracy. The democratic forces of France must first regain vigour and self-confidence, a task which requires time, opportunity and patience. But, if and when it is accomplished, there will be no room left for any independent *idée Gaulliste*; and General de Gaulle can only retain his well-merited and honoured place in French history if he parts with the highly controversial 'ism' that has been affixed to his name.

## A Proclamation by General de Gaulle to the Resistance Organizations

General de Gaulle's message to the organizations of the French resistance was given to the international press on the 24th of last June, 1942. It was published in France by the underground newspapers of the two zones, notably by *Combat*, *Libération* and *Franc-Tireur*.

The text consecrates the union between the resistance of the interior and the French Fighting Forces of the exterior. It resulted in the exchange of views between the National French Committee and the representatives of the many clandestine organizations.

It was on Easter Monday that the accord took place between General de Gaulle and an authorized representative of the resistance organizations.

The importance of this accord becomes greater when one realizes that after the negotiations which took place in July and August 1941, an understanding was established between the organizations of resistance and the Syndicalist C.G.T. and Catholic organizations, which had been dissolved by the Vichy régime, but which had nevertheless continued to exist and to function.

The last veils behind which the enemy has screened his acts of treachery against France have now been torn aside. The outcome of this war has become clear to all Frenchmen: it will be a choice between independence or slavery.

The sacred duty of all must be to contribute to the liberation of the country by the total annihilation of the invader. There is no hope for the future except in victory. But this gigantic task has revealed to the nation that the danger which threatens its existence has not come only from without, and that a victory which does not bring in its wake a courageous and fundamental rebirth will not be a victory. A moral, social, political and economic regime which abdicates following defeat, after having emerged from a criminal capitulation, now exalts itself under a personal dictatorship.

The French people condemns both, and while it unites for victory, it also gathers together for the revolution. In spite of the gags and chains which hold the nation in slavery, a thousand indications coming from its innermost depths testify to its hopes and desires.

## APPENDIX XXV

These we now proclaim in its name: We desire that all which belongs to the French nation should be returned to it. The end of the war means for us the restoration and the complete integrity of the territory belonging to the Empire; this, combined with the complete sovereignty of the nation itself, is our inheritance. Any usurpation, whether it comes from within or without, should be destroyed and stamped out. In the same manner we desire that France alone should be the one sole mistress of her territory. And that at the same time when Frenchmen shall be freed from the oppression of the enemy, individual liberty shall be given back to them. Once the enemy is banished from the territory all the men and women of our nation will elect a National Assembly which will decide the destiny of the country.

We desire that everything which has or which does harm the rights and interests of our national honour shall be punished and abolished. This means first, that the enemy leaders who abuse the laws of war to the detriment of French persons or property, as well as the traitors who co-operate with them, must be punished. It means secondly, that the totalitarian system which raised the weapon which the enemy now uses against us, as well as the system of the coalition of special interests which was used against the national welfare, should be simultaneously and for ever abolished.

We desire that Frenchmen should live in security. Material guarantees must be given against perpetual tyranny and abuse of power which will assure to everyone liberty and dignity in his work and existence. National security and social security are for us essential goals and they are united in importance. We desire that mass organization of the people which was undertaken by the enemy—in defiance of religion and all moral and charitable laws—under the pretext of becoming strong enough to oppress others, should be definitely done away with. We desire at the same time, that in this strong renewing of the resources of the nation and the Empire under a well directed technique, the time-honoured slogan of 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity' shall from now on be put into practice in our country, so that everyone shall be free in his thoughts, his beliefs, and his actions, so that everyone shall have at the beginning of his social activities an equal chance with others, and that each one shall have the respect of all, and be entitled to any aid if necessary.

We desire that this war, which affects in the same manner the destiny of all peoples, and which unites the democracies in a single and combined effort, should have as a consequence of world organization, to establish in a desirable and solid manner a mutual aid to all nations in all countries. And we expect that France will occupy, in this international system, the eminent place to which her value and her genius entitle her.

France and the whole world struggle and suffer for liberty and

#### ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

justice, and the right for individuals to decide their own fate. This right of individuals to their own lives, this war for justice and liberty must be won in fact as well as in theory, for the good of each individual as well as for the good of each state. Such a victory is the only one that can compensate for the ordeals which France has suffered, the only one which can open for us the new road to grandeur. Such a victory is worth all possible effort and all possible sacrifice. We shall win it.

*Ernest Lindley**For Monday, 12 July, 1943.*

## BRITISH VIEWS ON DE GAULLE

Copies of a statement of British policy towards General de Gaulle have been placed in the hands of British and American officials in Washington. The statement was originally prepared, it is understood, to acquaint British officials and the British press with the views of the Prime Minister.

To weigh in full its significance, it is necessary to bear in mind that after the fall of France, the British Government devoted itself energetically to building up General de Gaulle. It invested millions of pounds sterling yearly in paying and supplying his armies and his administrative overhead. Except for small revenues from the colonies under Free French control, these were de Gaulle's only financial resources. Moreover, it was the British broadcasts to France which made his name the symbol of resistance among his conquered countrymen.

The British stuck with de Gaulle through thick and thin, condoning his faults and mistakes. Some months ago the British Government began to modify its policy towards de Gaulle. But this was interpreted in some quarters as a reluctant concession to the United States Government, which had assumed primary responsibility for the Allied venture in French North Africa.

The British statement now at hand, it is felt here, destroys that hypothesis as well as several others advanced by de Gaulle's American and British supporters. Among its high points are these:

1. De Gaulle can no longer be considered a reliable friend of Britain. In spite of all that he owes to British assistance and support, he has left a 'trail of Anglophobia' wherever he has been.
2. From August 1941 on, he has tried to play Great Britain against the United States, and the United States against Britain.
3. He has striven to create friction between the British and French in Syria.
4. He clearly has 'Fascist and dictatorial tendencies'.
5. In spite of these grounds for complaint, the British Government has treated de Gaulle fairly and recognizes the value which his

name has come to have in France—chiefly through British publicity. It still hopes that he will co-operate loyally as co-President of the new French National Committee of Liberation. So far, however, he has struggled for complete mastery.

6. Peace and order and smooth communications in the French North African territory are essential to the great military operations now being prepared. (The statement was written before the invasion of Sicily.) Likewise it is highly important to avoid throwing into turmoil the French forces which the United States is now arming.

The statement alludes to President Roosevelt's strong views on the subject, and to the need for taking care that the differences among the French are not allowed to affect British-American relations. But the reasons given for dissatisfaction with de Gaulle were based on British experience and observation.

In the Syrian difficulties, referred to in the statement, the United States has played no part. The Free French, with British military support, wrested Syria from the Vichyites in August 1941, to forestall an Axis *coup*. The Free French assumed civilian and local military control. The British retained over-all military control. Syria is an important base of the Middle East Command. Its stability is essential to the conduct of the war. But there, as in North Africa and elsewhere, de Gaulle, according to this statement, has sought to set the French against the British.

It is not difficult to arouse popular support among one's own people by playing to their nationalist sentiments. This is de Gaulle's tactic, and it may be that it is winning some success. But it is not the way to wage coalition warfare. The restoration of France depends on American and British arms: even the new French Army in North Africa is being equipped with American arms.

The United States and Britain are not trying to foist a puppet on the French people. They have given their solemn pledge that the independence of France will be restored and that the French people will be given the opportunity to form a government of their own choosing. They do have a right to expect the full collaboration of patriotic Frenchmen in the vast military effort necessary to liberate France, if it is to be liberated.

But de Gaulle, it is felt in Washington and, as this statement shows,



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in London, is chiefly concerned with his own political power. He is behaving as an opponent of Britain and the United States, rather than as an ally.

*Washington Post and Des Moines Register and  
Tribune Syndicate*

## United States Critics of General de Gaulle

From *The Times*, 16 July 1943.

## CONFLICTING EVIDENCE

From our own correspondent. *WASHINGTON, 15 JULY*

In its editorial columns this morning the *Washington Post* returns to the question of the document on which Mr Ernest Lindley and others before him have based their attacks on General de Gaulle.

'The statement,' Mr Lindley said, 'was originally prepared, it is understood, to acquaint British officials and the British press with the views of the Prime Minister,' and the *Post* finds it 'highly significant that the British Embassy denies any knowledge of any such document.' It further notes that the Prime Minister's words in the Commons on July 1st were 'something very different from what Mr Lindley says is contained in the privately circulated statement' of his views, and then remarks:

'We are asked to believe, in short, that Mr Churchill is capable of making one statement of his views to the Commons, the body to which he is constitutionally responsible, and another contrary statement for the benefit of British and American officials and certain favoured and apparently carefully chosen newspaper men.'

The newspaper speaks of 'pipeline journalism' as a 'sinister phenomenon' and says that in this case either the British or the American Government 'should clear up the matter before the United Nations get bogged down in conspiracy'. It reiterates that 'the only way to depersonalize our relations with France is to recognize the French Committee'.

## The Prime Minister and General de Gaulle in the House of Commons

From *The Times*, 22 July 1943.

### A SECRET DOCUMENT

Mr Boothby (Aberdeen, E., U.) asked the Prime Minister if he had considered the document, a copy of which had been sent him, purporting to have been officially prepared to acquaint British officials and the British press with the views of the Prime Minister on the subject of General de Gaulle, and what steps he was taking to put a stop to the dissemination of mis-statements liable to prejudice the relations of this country with the United Nations.

Mr Churchill—‘Contrary to the statement in my honourable friend’s question, no document has been received from him, but only a cutting from a newspaper which refers to a document. I take full responsibility for this document, the text of which was drafted personally by me. It is a confidential document. I am not prepared to discuss it otherwise than in secret session, and then only if there were a general desire from the House to have a secret session.’

Mr Boothby—‘May I ask whether a document purporting to be this document has not in fact been published in a Washington newspaper, and does he not think that these continued Press attacks on General de Gaulle are or may be harmful to the Allied cause, and will he use his great influence with the United States to try to get them to join us in an effort to increase and not decrease the prestige and unity of the French Committee of National Liberation?’

Mr Churchill—‘I said I was not prepared to discuss the matter otherwise than in a secret session, and I adhere to that.’

## Recognition of the French Committee of National Liberation

Statement by the President of the United States

(Released to the press by the White House 26 August 1943.)

The Government of the United States desires again to make clear its purpose of co-operating with all patriotic Frenchmen, looking to the liberation of the French people and French territories from the oppressions of the enemy.

The Government of the United States, accordingly, welcomes the establishment of the French Committee of National Liberation. It is our expectation that the Committee will function on the principle of collective responsibility of all its members for the active prosecution of the war.

In view of the paramount importance of the common war effort, the relationship with the French Committee of National Liberation must continue to be subject to the military requirements of the Allied commanders.

The Government of the United States takes note, with sympathy, of the desire of the Committee to be regarded as the body qualified to insure the administration and defense of French interests. The extent to which it may be possible to give effect to this desire must however be reserved for consideration in each case as it arises.

On these understandings the Government of the United States recognizes the French Committee of National Liberation as administering those French overseas territories which acknowledge its authority.

This statement does not constitute recognition of a government of France or of the French Empire by the Government of the United States.

It does constitute recognition of the French Committee of National Liberation as functioning within specific limitations during the war. Later on the people of France, in a free and untrammelled manner, will proceed in due course to select their own government and their own officials to administer it.

The Government of the United States welcomes the Committee's

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expressed determination to continue the common struggle in close co-operation with all the Allies until French soil is freed from its invaders and until victory is complete over all enemy powers.

May the restoration of France come with utmost speed.

## Algiers has its Root-and-Branch Plan for Liberated France

Excerpt from the *Daily Telegraph & Morning Post* of Tuesday May 9  
1944

Political and Press Control: Two Significant Ordinances  
By E. B. Wareing,  
formerly chief of the *Daily Telegraph* Paris staff,  
who has recently re-visited Algiers

The restoration of French nationhood through the revival of self-respect, the deepening of a sense of solidarity with the Allies, and, above all, the achievement of domestic unity are not matters that concern France alone. They are of basic importance to the post-war world and a vital necessity to Britain—four air-minutes removed, in either direction, from the French coast.

Weakened still, but convalescent, the spirit of France presents a problem of the utmost delicacy on the eve of operations which will bring Frenchmen into brusque contact with the Allied Forces, whose preliminary moves, of sad necessity, have taken the form of destructive bombing of French territory, costing innocent lives despite every care.

One calls to memory Gen. de Gaulle's proclamation of June 1940, calling for resistance. It is as fine a piece of political prescience as ever existed. It is as true now as then.

'Nothing is lost, because this war is a world war. In the free universe immense forces have not yet swung into operation. Some day these forces will crush the enemy. On that day France must be present at the victory. She will then regain her liberty and her greatness. Such is my goal, my only goal!'

### *Gen. de Gaulle's Prestige*

How far has Gen. de Gaulle justified himself since? How far has he proved himself capable of being the unquestioned leader of all Frenchmen? Does France need a leader with overruling personal powers? These were the questions which I set myself on my recent and third visit to Algiers.

The general impression which I received was that the prestige of Gen. de Gaulle personally had increased since my last visit in December, whilst that of the Committee of National Liberation as a whole had diminished. The tendency is to blame the Committee for what goes wrong and to praise de Gaulle for what goes right.

The European population of Algeria blames the Committee for the deplorable living conditions there. The ordinary citizen receives no milk, no butter and no cheese, very little coffee, no fresh vegetables, no tea and extremely little meat, the butchers' shops being often closed for weeks at a time. There is a rapacious black market, and Frenchmen who have escaped from France have told me that they can live better and more cheaply, except for the bad quality of the bread and the shortage of wine, in Paris than in Algiers.

*Value of the Assembly*

To whom the blame should, in equity, be attached seems an open question; the authority nominally responsible is the Governor-General of Algeria, but the presence of the Committee which claims the status of a Government naturally causes criticism to be shifted on to its shoulders.

The Consultative Assembly, composed mainly of resistance delegates selected by de Gaullist organs, is also felt to be very much divorced from the realities of life.

It falls between two stools: owing to the absence of fresh contacts with France, it is necessarily rather more of a debating society than of a Parliament. One of its members in a private conversation with me likened it to the *Conférences Môle* which are attended in Paris by young men intending to devote themselves to public service or to enter the Chamber of Deputies, and which hold debates on the parliamentary model in much the same way as the Oxford Union.

Under the able chairmanship of M. Gouin, discussions are conducted in a businesslike way and reveal a high level of oratory and political thought, preponderantly of Left Wing tendency. They have, however, an academic flavour, and when the Committee of National Liberation has decisions of practical importance to take they are embodied in ordinances and decrees on which the Assembly is not publicly consulted.

It was chiefly busy during the last session with two pieces of legislation which cannot be applied until the liberation of France has been accomplished—namely, an ordinance regarding the civil and political

administration of France, which was a compromise between the original projects put forward by members of the Assembly, and another ordinance regarding the control of the Press.

The former was adopted by the Committee and is ready to go into force, whilst no final decision has been taken regarding the Press ordinance.

## *Foreshadowing a Coup*

It may now be stated publicly that behind this legislation was a lengthy scheme, elaborated last October by the Central Committee of Resistance Movements in France, which has hitherto been kept relatively secret. This was shown to me on the understanding that no reference should be made to its military clauses.

On its political side it is a rather startling document, of totalitarian trend, which provides for nothing less than what is called a 'lightning insurrection'. This is to take place 'in the short space of time between the departure or decisive weakening of the Germans and the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons'.

The body which drew up the scheme represents all but two sections of the action groups of the resistance movement co-ordinated under the National Council of Resistance. The Communists and the paramilitary groups, for different reasons, are opposed to the political character of the action outlined. The purposes of the 'lightning insurrection' on its political side are:

1. To paralyse . . . the Vichy organisation, rendering impossible any attempt by Pétain to change sides.
2. To guarantee the elimination within a few hours of all officials and their replacement in order to confront the Allied authorities with the *fait accompli* of an administrative machine working in a regular way and representing the will of French resistance.
3. To guarantee within a few hours the revolutionary repression of treason and, when this has been done as a matter of legitimate reprisal, to ensure public order, to which the Allied military authorities naturally attach great value.
4. To give, by manifestations of force and mass, a popular and democratic basis to the Provisional Government and to bring about international recognition for the *de facto* Government of Gen. de Gaulle.
5. To call upon the Committee of National Liberation to let its



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actions be inspired by the will of the nation and not by diplomatic opportunism, and to impose upon the Provisional Government immediate revolutionary social and economic measures so that, as Gen. de Gaulle has promised, 'the French people shall have their say again'.

The insurrection is to be put into effect by Committees of Liberation, each having five to eight members. There is to be one for each Department, with local sub-committees.

Since this scheme was first put forward the Central Committee of Resistance Movements in France has been expressing considerable impatience and it has sent a number of sharp reminders to Algiers that time might be short and that the bodies in France were finding their work impeded by the slowness with which Algiers is acting. Since then, however, the Committee of National Liberation has passed ordinances, some of them secret, which are understood to go far towards satisfying the demands of the Central Committee.

The Communists still maintain reserve and have criticised the Committee's action in passing secret legislation, pointing out its dangerous implications.

The ordinance on the Press can also best be described as totalitarian, and, if applied in full, it would bring the French Press and news agency organisation even closer to the Italian Fascist model than they are at present.

#### *Treatment of the Press*

Last month a hitherto unknown body described as 'The National Federation of the Clandestine Press in France', and said to represent 13 underground papers of all shades of opinion, called for even more drastic action than the ordinance provides. It asks that this should include the expropriation 'from the first day of liberation' of all Press concerns without exception, but with compensation for proprietors of proved patriotism.

All seized property would then be handed over to the resistance organisations and other political bodies.

How far this 'Federation' effectively exists or, in present circumstances, can consult affiliated newspapers scattered throughout France is an open question. In any case its proposals bear a striking resemblance to those before the Committee of National Liberation, whose hands will be strengthened against criticism of the draft ordinance.

'These radical measures,' it will be said, 'are willed by the people of France: here is the proof.'

One newspaper, and one alone, the *Echo d'Alger*, is being allowed to criticise the treatment of the Press and to demand that liberty be restored. On 15 March, for example, it wrote: 'The censorship ought to be lifted except for military secrets. We protest against the steel brakes and the golden curb which it is thought fit to apply to us.'

Even the strongly de Gaullist organ, *Alger Républicain*, on 29 March, published a mysteriously worded complaint about 'the friend whom we meet every day' who brings items of news 'at the end of a piece of elastic which returns them to his hands at the moment when they are about to be used.'

According to the writer, this 'friend'—and the reference is obviously to an official of the Information Service who pays a nightly visit to all the newspaper offices—gives advice in the following terms:

'You can publish this but with discretion. Do not give it too large a headline but bury it among other items. In fact, publish it without appearing to have noticed it.'

#### *Effects of 'Discretion'*

'Discretion' is the keynote of the handling of the Press. Thus, the written directives which are sent out in Fascist countries are replaced in North Africa by telephone calls or private visits, but the effect is very much the same. Editors have told me that they are, in fact, as much subject to control as they were under the Vichy régime. Certainly the resemblance of the Algiers newspapers to one another the morning after the nightly visit is more than surprising.

On the day of Pucheu's execution the fact was announced with precisely the same headlines and text by the de Gaullist and the non-de Gaullist newspapers.

Comment on matters regarded as of international interest is for the most part permitted only in the form of quotations from political or diplomatic correspondents of the *France-Afrique* News Agency. This, it will be remembered, lost its independence as the result of action taken a few days after the receipt by Gen. de Gaulle of a letter from three Communist leaders complaining that Pucheu's defence had been circulated by the agency to the newspapers.

## Letter from Henri de Kerillis to Felix Gouin

My dear President and friend:

In Washington on Thursday, 14 October 1943, I was informed of a telegram from M. Philip, Commissioner of the Interior, summoning members of parliament resident in America to Algiers on 3 November for the purpose of electing deputies and senators destined to become members of the Consultative Assembly provided for in the Gaullist Constitution.

This summons left me only 26 days in which to get ready, whereas medical formalities and government regulations normally require four weeks, barring exceptional cases, and the journey alone takes two or three, save under extraordinarily favourable circumstances.

I saw in this action, with respect to the members of Parliament, not only a lack of consideration, but above all a cold determination to prevent them from carrying out the mission for which they were supposedly being convened.

You will therefore permit me to make this formal protest.

I have every reason to fear furthermore that the measures taken to prevent French members of Parliament in exile in America from going to Algiers is part of a systematic campaign to bar from French politics any influence favourable to America. As you can see for yourself, most of the Algiers Committee have, in many a case, begun again on the anti-Anglo-Saxon propaganda of the Vichy government, more subtly but just as efficaciously.

This said, my dear colleague, I also wish to protest against the purpose of the summons that has been sent to us.

I do not recognize the right of anyone, unless it be the French people, to destroy the Constitution of the Republic to which they have given themselves of their own free will and which they themselves will certainly wish to amend in order to adapt it to the new era.

Now, the creation of a Consultative Assembly is tantamount to destroying the legislative power, just as the creation of the Committee of Liberation amounts to destroying the executive powers as the constitution of the Third Republic intended them to be.

The Assembly to which the deputies are summoned, in the

humiliating proportion of 20 members to 80, has only to advise. The executive authority will have the right to veto. We are reverting to the darkest ages of Absolute Monarchy, when the King assembled the States-General reserving the right to disregard their advice and invoking his famous: 'Such is our good pleasure.' Moreover, the King represented a power recognized as legitimate in those days. Again, the deputies of the States-General were elected by the three Orders, whereas 52 members out of 80 on the Consultative Assembly will be practically chosen by the executive power.

Let us have the courage to acknowledge and broadcast the fact that the new Algiers Constitution is the most dictatorial France has ever seen. And how could I, for my part, approve of it when one of the main objects of this war is to save Democracy and crush individual power? I share the opinion expressed by President Roosevelt on 17 September 1943, before the American Congress, when he declared that the war would not be won unless all the forms of Fascism, not only the evil forms of Fascism, were eradicated.

Let me add that I consider the regulations set forth in M. Philip's letter against the deputies who voted on 10 July 1940, in favour of Marshal Pétain, unacceptable. Those deputies are all declared outcasts. And they are invited to seek absolution in order to be admitted to their colleagues' transactions. You know how opposed I am to Marshal Pétain (who, by the way, has taken my French nationality from me) because of the part the Marshal played before the armistice, then in concluding the armistice, and later in collaborating with M. Laval and the Germans. But the deputies who voted for Marshal Pétain on 10 July 1940 were merely interpreting the will of the French people who, helpless, overwhelmed by the disaster, fell into the arms of the man in whom they saw the 'Hero of Verdun'. Besides their vote was formally submitted to the consent of the people when it could be freely expressed after the war. Save for a few exceptions those deputies are guilty only of having participated in a mistake common to all Frenchmen. Many of them, since then, have suffered cruelly at the hands of the Germans. Some of them are in prison or hunted. Some are resisting heroically and are sacrificing themselves for the nation. Certain members of the Committee of Liberation who have not known the enemy yoke, who have been fortunate enough to shield their families from the hardships of invasion, have no right to declare those deputies outcasts. The National Committee of London and

afterwards the Algiers Committee of Liberation have brought notorious 'Pétainist' officials into the administration. On the other hand, 'Pétainist' officers and soldiers have died in great numbers on the battlefields of Tunisia. Would one dare to brand them as infamous? And if not, why bear down on those particular deputies, precisely when it is the sacred duty of all Frenchmen to stand shoulder to shoulder united against the Germans?

The ulterior motive seems clear to me. In the Washington and London governments there are friends of France, staunch democrats, who want the liberating countries to restore France, after victory, to the same political condition she was in when Germany defeated her. They do not intend to prevent her from changing a constitution which has proved to be lamentably deficient. But they want her to have time to recover her prisoners and her children scattered in exile, to rid herself of the deadly poisons German propaganda has injected into hearts and minds, and finally to know what is going on outside in a world which for years has been hidden from them behind their prison walls. They want all this to save France from civil war and disastrous adventures. And to stop France's good friends who advocate that solution from being heard the Gaullists are trying to discredit Parliament, the only legitimate trustee of the will of the French people. And that is the spirit in which the Committee of Liberation wrote the letter summoning the deputies in terms equivalent to an affront.

If therefore I had been able to answer the call, it would have been to raise formal protest in Algiers and to vote both against the establishment of the Consultative Assembly and against the manner in which the representatives of the French people have been treated.

The French people, moreover, gave us an absolute and inviolable mission—that of defending our Country and the Republic. We have no right to abdicate. The nation has entrusted us with control over the executive power and the authority to enact laws. The nation expected us to be judges and we have no right to turn defendants. We shall be responsible to the French people and to History, until such time as the nation may be called upon, in perfect freedom, to elect our successors. If the French people crushed by the enemy's armies must suffer new trials in the future through the fault of masters who, under cover of the defeat, seized political power, we would be guilty in their eyes, and this time cast out for ever by the people themselves.

Let me remind you that when the Vichy government, under pressure from the Germans, browbeat, humiliated and dissolved the Parliament, the Presidents of the Chamber and of the Senate in their forceful protests expressed the shout of condemnation that arose from the French consciousness.

Today the Algiers government copies the Vichy government, in its turn represses parliamentary assemblies, replaces them by a servile assembly, outrages and humiliates the nation's representation and would certainly draw down on its head the same indignant protest if those two great Frenchmen were not prevented by the enemy from doing so.

It is our duty, in absence of those two men, to interpret their thought which is the thought of the people.

I shall ask you to be so kind as to read this letter to my colleagues that it may appear in the *Journal Officiel*. If they try to prevent you by force from doing so, I would ask you to convey it to each one of them. I am greatly distressed that I cannot be with you all in these dramatic moments. At least I have the consolation of thinking that now, just as on the day when Marshal Pétain seized power, one can do more for France from the outside, as a free man, than inside, as a prisoner, under the sombre shadow of a military dictatorship.

Rest assured, my dear President and friend, that I have unfailing faith in the future of France and that I shall work to the very end with all the strength of my being for her deliverance and for her greatness. That was the spirit in which on 17 June 1940, in London, I rallied enthusiastically to General de Gaulle's cause, when that cause stood for a refusal to accept the armistice, loyalty to the British alliance, a fight to the finish. In those days I believed that General de Gaulle was going to lead the heroes who came at his call to join him from all the corners of the globe, from battle to battle; and that with his own hands he would unfurl our flag on the battlefields of liberation: In the same spirit I cannot approve either the conditions under which the Algiers government was formed, or the measures it takes, measures contrary to our democratic ideal, nor certain general lines of policy which it assumes the right to map out and which can involve the future of France for years to come against her will and even without her knowledge.

I send you my protest from an anguished heart. In the night of exile and grief for our martyrs, I hope soon to be able to fling across the

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Atlantic a cry of faith and enthusiasm on the announcement that France has found again the bright road of her destiny.

With affectionate greetings to you and to my dear colleagues.

HENRI DE KERILLIS

## The Sequestration of the Press, the Radio and the Film Industry

### I. ORDER RELATING TO THE SEQUESTRATION OF THE PRESS IN METROPOLITAN FRANCE DURING ITS LIBERATION

The Provisional Government of the French Republic,

Upon the report of the Commissioner for Information:

In view of the order of 3 June 1940 setting up the French National Liberation Committee, together with the order of 3 June 1944:

The competent judicial committee,

Orders:

*Article I.*—As the liberation of the metropolitan territory proceeds, the publication of all newspapers and periodicals having carried out the orders of the occupation authorities or the authority calling itself the government of France, is suspended.

The property and assets of all kinds used in connection with them are, at the request of the Commissioner for Information, placed under judicial sequestration by order of the President of the competent civil tribunal. The Commissioner for Information can demand all requisition measures, by virtue of the law of 11 July 1938, in respect of any printing establishment for press or other purposes, in respect of any publicity agency and any company for press transport and newspaper circulation having been used for printing, publicity and distribution of newspapers and periodicals defined in the first paragraph of this article.

*Article II.*—Any trade union or federal press organization on French territory is dissolved with full legality, at the moment of the liberation.

*Article III.*—Regional press and information committees will be created, composed as follows:

Two representatives of the Commissioner for Information, appointed by the latter, of whom one shall be president.

Three journalist representatives appointed by those proposed by the latter, or by the group of the liberation committee concerned, in cases where the territorial competence of the regional committee includes several *départements*.

Three journalist representatives appointed by the trade unions which were most representative on 16 June 1940.



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The members other than the representatives of the Commissioner for Information shall be appointed by order of the Regional Commissioner for the Republic.

Each order defines the territorial competence of the committee that it sets up. All the committees shall be affiliated to a national press and information committee, appointed by order following the proposals of the Commissioner for Information and composed as follows:

Two representatives of the Commissioner for Information, of whom one shall be president.

Three members proposed by the National Council of the Resistance.

Three journalist representatives appointed by the trade union organizations which were most representative on 16 June 1940.

*Article IV.*—It is for the Regional Committees:

1. To authorize the publication of daily newspapers and periodicals as technical possibilities become available. Refusal to grant authorization can be the subject of appeal to the Commissioner of Information;
2. To supply all advice and information useful to the Commissioner for information concerning press matters.

*Article V.*—It is for the National Committee to give the Regional Committees general directions from which they can take a lead, to co-ordinate and unify their activities over the whole of the liberated territory.

*Article VI.*—The publication of a newspaper or periodical, any activity by a printing establishment for the press, by any publicity agency, by any company of press transport or distribution, which has not obtained prior authorization or any undertaking carrying out activity contrary to what is laid down in this order, shall be punished by a term of imprisonment of six days to six months for the persons responsible and by a fine of 10,000 to 100,000 francs.

*Article VII.*—This order shall be published in the *Journal Officiel* of the French Republic and carried out as law.

ALGIERS, 22 JUNE 1944

DE GAULLE

Through the provisional government of the French Republic,

The Commissioner for Information: H. BONNET

The Commissioner for Justice: FRANÇOIS DE MENTHON

The Commissioner for the Interior: EMMANUEL D'ASTIER

2. ORDER CONCERNING BROADCASTING

The Provisional Government of the French Republic,  
Upon the report of the Commissioner for Information:

In view of the order of 3 June 1943, setting up the French National Liberation Committee, together with the order of 3 June 1944:

The competent judicial committee,

Orders:

*Article I.*—On the metropolitan territory, as the liberation proceeds, and from the date on which the present order comes into force, the Commissioner for Information takes direct charge of, and exploits through his services, all broadcasting stations belonging to the authority which claims to be the government of France, or exploited by the latter or by public offices or establishments of the State.

*Article II.*—It is forbidden, on liberated territory, to use any equipment and installations whatsoever capable of being used for broadcasting other than the equipment or installations defined in the preceding article.

The Commissioner for Information shall petition the President of the competent civil court to place under judicial sequestration any equipment which has been used or could be used for broadcasting, whether or not it is being used and whether it has been used by the enemy or by a company of a private enterprise which has obeyed the orders of the authority claiming to be the government of France or of the occupation authority.

The use of the equipment or the renewed functioning of the said installations can only be effected with the authorization of the Commissioner for Information or his representative.

These measures will be applied in particular to transmitting equipment, pylons, aërials, reservoirs, machines with their accessories, power generators, electrical fittings and cables, installations of high and low frequency, studios for wireless reception and transmission, microphones, recording equipment, styluses, record-players, used or blank records, equipment used for radio-reporting and motor buses.

*Article III.*—It is obligatory for all equipment defined in Article II, which has been used or could be used for radio transmission and has been removed from existing installations or used in secret, to be declared to the representative of the Commissioner for Information within one month from the date when this order comes into force in the place where it is situated.

*Article IV.*—The Commissioner for Information alone is qualified to give all directives for the appointment of staff, the choice of time-tables and the establishment of programmes by the transmitting station, until the time when a definitive statute is issued concerning the organization of broadcasting in France and on the situation of public or private persons who took part in it after 16 June 1940.

*Article V.*—The use of any equipment and installation whatsoever which could be used for radio transmission without prior authorization from the Commissioner for Information, failure to declare broadcasting equipment and any fraudulent misuse of it shall be punishable by a fine of 100 to 100,000 francs and by a term of imprisonment from six days to six months or by one of these penalties only.

*Article VI.*—This order shall be published in the *Journal Officiel* of the French Republic and carried out as law.

ALGIERS, 22 JUNE 1944

DE GAULLE

Through the Provisional Government of the French Republic,

The Commissioner for Information: H. BONNET

The Commissioner for Justice: FRANÇOIS DE MENTHON

The Commissioner for Communications and the Navy:

RENÉ MAYER

### 3. ORDER CONCERNING CINEMATOGRAPH SHOWS ON METROPOLITAN TERRITORY DURING ITS LIBERATION

The Provisional Government of the French Republic,

Upon the report of the Commissioner for Information:

In view of the order of 3 June 1943 setting up the French National Liberation Committee, together with the order of 3 June 1944:

In view of the order of 14 March 1944 concerning authority over metropolitan territory during its Liberation:

The competent judicial committee,

Orders:

*Article I.*—As the liberation of the metropolitan territory proceeds the programmes of cinematograph shows for all cinemas must be authorized by the delegate of the competent Commissioner for Information in respect of the location of the cinema. The authorization

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

for the programme must be shown, by the person operating the cinema, upon any request by the public authority.

*Article II.*—The Commissioner for Information may ask the President of the competent civil court to place under judicial sequestration, by injunction, all cinemas which obeyed the orders of the authority claiming to be the government of France or of the occupation authority, as well as the property and assets of all kinds used in the exploitation of these cinemas.

*Article III.*—Any assignment between living persons, setting up of a company, the hiring, management or programming of cinemas without the authorization of the Commissioner for Information is strictly forbidden on pain of being declared void.

*Article IV.*—Any infractions of the terms of the above articles shall be punished by a fine of 1,000 to 100,000 francs and by a term of imprisonment of six days to six months or by one of these penalties only.

*Article V.*—This order shall be published in the *Journal Officiel* of the French Republic and carried out as law.

ALGIERS, 22 JUNE 1944

DE GAULLE

Through the Provisional Government of the French Republic,

The commissioner for Information: H. BONNET

The Commissioner for Justice: FRANÇOIS DE MENTHON

### 4. ORDER CONCERNING THE CINEMATOGRAPH INDUSTRY ON METROPOLITAN TERRITORY DURING THE LIBERATION

The Provisional Government of the French Republic,

Upon the report of the Commissioner for Information:

In view of the order of 3 June 1943 setting up the French National Liberation Committee, together with the order of 3 June 1944:

The competent judicial committee,

Orders:

*Article I.*—All the documents concerning the cinematograph industry issued by the authority calling itself the government of France are declared void and shall remain so, in particular the documents called 'law of 26 October 1940' regulating the cinematograph industry, 'the decree of 7 February 1941' concerning the control over cinema

receipts, and 'law of 17 November 1941' concerning the arrangements of showing film newsreels.

*Article II.*—Unless authorization is given by the Commissioner for information no film show programmes may include more than one film lasting longer than one hour whatever the length of the programme.

*Article III.*—It is obligatory for the hiring of films to be carried out by means of a percentage of the net global takings, that is to say on the gross takings, after the deduction of government tax, concessions to the poor and municipal tax, received by the entire programme in which the film constitutes one element.

*Article IV.*—Concealment of part of the takings of a cinema programme is punished by a fine of 100 to 10,000 francs.

A decree made in accordance with the proposals of the Commissioner for Information, the Commissioner for Social Affairs and the Commissioner for Finance will fix the conditions under which trade union organizations will have access to the checking of takings.

*Article V.*—The act known as 'law of 31 December 1941' modifying the entertainment tax system acquires the force of law.

*Article VI.*—The act known as 'decree of 7 February 1941' concerning fire precautions in buildings or places open to the public acquires the force of a decree.

*Article VII.*—The present order shall be published in the *Journal Officiel* of the French Republic and carried out as law.

ALGIERS, 22 JUNE 1944

DE GAULLE

Through the Provisional Government of the French Republic,

The Commissioner for Information: H. BONNET

The Commissioner for Commerce: PIERRE MENDES-FRANCE

The Commissioner for Social Affairs: A. TIXIER

##### 5. ORDER CONCERNING THE SEQUESTRATION OF FILMS

We publish below the text of the order of 22 June 1944 concerning the sequestration of films.

We published yesterday in this space the text of the four other orders made on the same date by the provisional Government relating to the press, the radio and the cinema.

The Provisional Government of the French Republic,  
Upon the report of the Commissioner for Information:

In view of the order of 3 June 1943 setting up the French National Liberation Committee, together with the order of 3 June 1944:

In view of the order of 14 March 1944 concerning the exercise of civil and military powers in metropolitan territory during its liberation:

The competent judicial committee,

Orders:

*Article I.*—Films and copies of films produced by the enemy, the film newspaper *France-Actualités*, the film magazine *France en marche* and all other films or documentaries produced at the order of, under the control or inspiration of the secretariat for information of the authority calling itself the government of France, as well as the publicity organs concerned for each of them, must by law be handed over to the delegate of the Commission for Information within one week from the entry into force of the present order at the place where they are situated.

*Article II.*—The following shall be placed under judicial sequestration by injunction on the part of the President of the competent civil court at the demand of the Commissioner for Information or his delegate:

1. The negatives of all films whatever their format and character presented or introduced for the first time into France after 17 June 1940 as well as copies of them and the publicity material for the said films.
2. The equipment, books, records and accounts and assets of all kinds of all enterprises taking part in the production or distribution of films after 17 June 1940.

*Article III.*—All holders of films other than those defined in Article I must, within fifteen days, counting from the coming into force of this order at the place of his residence, hand over to the representative of the Commissariat for Information the inventory of the objects specified in Article II. This inventory will indicate the place where they are kept, the name and address of the person on whose behalf these objects are being held.

All holders of equipment, books, records or documents and assets of all kinds defined in Article II, paragraph 2, are under an obligation to submit to the same declarations.

*Article IV.*—Any contravention of the terms of the above articles shall be punished by a fine of 100 to 100,000 francs and by a term of

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imprisonment of six days to six months or by one of these penalties only.

*Article V.*—This order shall be published in the *Journal Officiel* of the French Republic and carried out as law.

ALGIERS, 22 JUNE 1944

DE GAULLE

Through the Provisional Government of the French Republic,

The Commissioner for Information: H. BONNET

The Commissioner for Justice: FRANÇOIS DE MENTHON

## Draft Law made in Algiers on the Organization of Public Authorities

Until the day when it would be possible to hold properly organized elections in each commune, the Municipal Assemblies elected before 1 September 1939 would be maintained or brought back into operation.

As a result, the municipal Councils which had been dissolved, the Mayors, Assistants and Councillors who had been dismissed or suspended after this date, would be immediately restored to their rights, except in cases of disbarment due to offences against common law and taking into account the disqualification of Mayors, Assistants and Town Councillors having served or favoured the enemy or the usurper.

Correlatively the communal Assemblies appointed by the usurper, as well as the municipal Delegations created after 1 September 1939, would be dissolved, and the elected Assemblies which, having been maintained since July 1940, have favoured or served the plans of the enemy or the usurper, would also be dissolved; they would be replaced by special Delegations appointed by the competent authority on the advice of the Departmental Committee of Liberation.

The administrative bodies for the communes would immediately undertake the revision or reconstitution of the electoral lists.

The General Councils would be re-established on the same conditions as the Municipal Councils or eventually replaced by Departmental Commissions.

A special Order drawn up in accordance with the opinion of the Provisional Consultative Assembly would regulate the municipal administration of Paris and of the *département* of Seine during the transitional period and would fix the electoral system provisionally applicable to the municipal Council of Paris and the general Council of the Seine.

As soon as the electoral lists are finally drawn up in the *département*, and at the latest three months after the liberation of the *département*, the Prefect shall be instructed to summon the Electoral College in order to proceed to the election of the Municipalities and of a Provisional General Council.



Women would be eligible on the same conditions as men. From the time of the Liberation a Departmental Committee of Liberation should be set up in each *département* to assist the Prefect.

Section II deals with the Provisional Representative Assembly. The Provisional Consultative Assembly would move to France at the same time as the French National Liberation Committee and would be summoned in the town where the Public Authorities were sitting. It would be brought up to strength at once by Delegates from the various Organizations belonging to the National Resistance Council, appointed by the Controlling Committees of these organizations, in the proportion operating at the time and in equal numbers.

The Assembly would be further increased by:

1. Senators still occupying their posts, for the length of their mandates;
2. Elected members: each *département* would elect, following a majority obtained by a secret vote after two ballots, as many Delegates as its population, according to the latest legal census, includes 200,000 inhabitants, plus one for each additional 100,000. No *département* would elect fewer than two Delegates. Women would be eligible on the same conditions as men.

In the *département*, those who were not re-elected would cease to function with the exception of the senators whose mandate was still valid.

When elections have been held in two thirds of the *départements* on metropolitan territory, including that of Seine, the Provisional Consultative Assembly would transform itself into a Provisional Representative Assembly. The French National Liberation Committee would hand over its powers to the Assembly which, by an absolute majority of its members, would elect the President of the Provisional Government. The latter would form the Provisional Government and would present himself along with it before the Assembly which would be called upon by Ministerial Declaration to vote. A vote of confidence would confer on the Provisional Government, until the Constituant Assembly began to function, the powers defined by the law of 8 December 1939 on the circumstances of war.

The Provisional Representative Assembly would remain in office during this entire period and would be legally dissolved as soon as the Constituent Assembly began to function.

## The French First Army in Operation, 1944-5

With a note on its formation after the Fall of France in 1940

*Speech by André Demetz, former Chief of Staff of the French First Army, 7 May 1965*

In 1945, France found herself one of the victors of the Second World War.

On this twentieth anniversary of the most important event of our recent history, enough time has elapsed to enable us to look back objectively on the period when, after our crushing defeat of 1940, France's military participation in the victory of 1945 was planned and carried out.

The main instrument was the French First Army; and it is therefore the epic of that army which we intend to unfold—without, of course, attempting to retrace in detail all the operations of 1944-5; to do so would be out of all proportion to the patience that can reasonably be expected of our audience.

In any case, those who are interested in the details of these operations can find all they want to know in General de Lattre's *History of the French First Army*.

Based on unit records, staff archives, regimental and divisional reports, the *History of the French First Army* is packed with details, names, dates, which describe events right down to company, platoon or tank-crew level. For First Army veterans, it constitutes, as it were, a book of wartime memories.

But crowded and complete as it is, the book does not tell the full story of the French First Army. De Lattre deals, in fact, only with the period of his actual command: from his arrival in North Africa down to VE-Day, 8 May 1945.

But his Army was being formed even before 1944. In particular, 1943 was filled with events whose consequences and after-effects for the French First Army must be known before certain phases of the 1944-5 campaign can be fully understood and assessed.

In that connection, the notes and records of a first-hand witness can help to throw light on certain events of which little, so far, is generally known.

It is obvious, moreover, that twenty years later, it is possible to deal with certain subjects which de Lattre, who wrote his book shortly after the end of the war, was unwilling, or unable, to tackle.

Besides, other books have since appeared—General de Gaulle's War Memoirs or the posthumous work of General Giraud, *Un Seul But: la Victoire*, which appeared at the same time, and still more recently the memoirs of Anthony Eden, Churchill's wartime Foreign Secretary. And a large number of diplomatic archives have also been published in the meantime.

So that, with the aid of the fuller documentation now available, it is now possible to locate the events of the period in their true context and setting. Twenty years later, it is possible, I repeat, to attempt a synoptic view of the history of the First Army, and thereby to demonstrate the crucial role for France that was played, as part of the overall Allied war effort, by our First Army in the final stages of a World War.

#### 1. *Formation of the First Army*

In the mind of every good Frenchman, the army which landed in Provence on 15 August 1944 is the '*Army of Africa*', and rightly so.

For, though the First Army recruited a large number (some 130,000) of Metropolitan Frenchmen from the regions it liberated, its core and bulk was formed of French North African contingents, remobilized in 1943 and totalling about 250,000 men.

Meanwhile, Algerians, Tunisians, Moroccans and *Pieds Noirs*\* witnessed the arrival of Africans of the 'colonial' troops of French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa and, following the victory in Tunisia in May 1943, of a few Frenchmen from distant American and Pacific colonies coming to French North Africa via the so-called 'Free French' units. So it might rightly be called an 'Imperial Army'.

An Imperial Army—from an empire existing in the imagination of those who, after the defeat of 1940, pinned their hopes on the Force that would one day come from Overseas, and on the Allies. Their hopes were not unfulfilled.

But from 1940, the spirit of revenge had pushed many young Frenchmen to *act* rather than merely *hope*. They left to enlist in the units stationed in French North Africa. General Weygand, at that time delegate-general of the government and Commander-in-Chief, had encouraged in all sorts of ways this afflux of several tens of thousands

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\* Frenchmen born in Africa

of young men. At once he inspired them with the desire to acquire a knowledge of all military matters that would give the African Units the ability one day to stand up to the Germans.

Four years later the First Army could thank Weygand for its best N.C.O.s and for technicians who could not be provided, despite the mobilization, from French North Africa. The Imperial Army is indebted to the Mother Country for this close association between youth and seasoned veterans from overseas.

But the reconstruction of a modern army really began on a grand scale in November 1942 when, after the Allied landings, France re-entered the war through her territories in North Africa.

However, if the assembling of a large force—300,000 men—was not a difficult matter, the same was not true of the equipment of vast forces which had sprung up, as it were, overnight.

Without losing any time General Giraud persuaded the American Government to examine with him the question of re-arming without delay the French Army under the terms of Lend-Lease.

A few weeks later, the question was included on the agenda of an inter-allied conference which led to the Anfa agreements of 24 January 1943.

The exact text of the Anfa agreements has never been published. The circumstances in which they were signed remain obscure. And yet Anfa is one of the events of 1943 more fraught with consequences for the re-armament of the French Army, and thus for the formation of the First Army and the future course of its operations.

Let us look at it a little more closely.

In his book, General Giraud devotes an entire chapter to Anfa, but though he gives innumerable details, he cites only global figures on the strength of the forces whose re-equipment he was requesting: 300,000 men, 12 divisions.

General de Gaulle, in Volume II of his *Mémoires de Guerre*, also refers to the Anfa conference in a few pages of a chapter headed 'Comedy'. In choosing this rather surprising title some years after the event, did de Gaulle wish to describe in one word his feelings towards the conference and its organizers? It is possible.

In any case, Anthony Eden tells us in his memoirs that de Gaulle first refused the Allies' invitation to attend Anfa (which Eden describes as 'inconceivable'), and finally accepted, though without enthusiasm.

But one specific incident, noted at the time by one of the participants at the Anfa luncheon given by Giraud in honour of de Gaulle on his arrival from London, confirms what is suggested by the memoirs of both de Gaulle and Eden.

In conversation among Frenchmen, de Gaulle did not hide his feelings on the agreements under study: 'What is the use,' he asked Giraud, in more or less these terms, 'of these ten or so divisions you want re-armed? It is pointless, at this juncture, to risk the life of a single French soldier. As far as France is concerned, the end of the war is a political matter which will be settled around a conference table.'

Nevertheless, the agreements were concluded a few days later. America undertook to furnish the equipment for 3 armoured divisions and the most up-to-date material for 8 motorized divisions. The French Air Force was to receive 1,000 fighter, bomber and transport planes. In addition, Giraud arranged that arms for 3 infantry divisions and 8 armoured divisions be sent immediately to the French units then fighting in Tunisia.

Thus Giraud got what he wanted. But de Gaulle had taken no active part in bringing about these results, and left Anfa without signing the agreements.

Not surprising, therefore, that later at Algiers, when the time came to put them into effect, de Gaulle's actions, if not lukewarm, certainly lacked conviction. He said so at Anfa. His aims lay in another direction. And in their excessive zeal to serve him, his entourage or his delegation were more eager to reinforce the Free French units—12,000 men in May 1943—to further their own aims, than to pave the way for a fusion of all French Forces with a view to a landing in France.

Recently published documents show it to have been a disgraceful period of enticement and desertions, organized within the units of the African Army themselves.\*

Who cannot but regret that, shortly after his appointment in Algiers, de Gaulle should have seen fit to condone all such baneful activities by requesting that amnesty be granted for all such offences predating 7 June 1943?

This amnesty was introduced, but the instigation of desertion continued. All the more credit, therefore, is due the Army of Africa

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\* See Appendices XIX and XX, pp. 303-8

units in overcoming a moral crisis which they obviously could have been spared.

Unfortunately, the application of the Anfa agreements was not, at first, encouraged by the Allies either.

In the first place, at the outset, there was an American lobby for MacArthur and the Pacific war effort which endeavoured to oppose the principle of deliveries of war material to the Mediterranean theatre of operations.

But even more telling were certain apparently harmless modifications in the text of Anfa, made by Churchill during a brief visit to Algiers shortly after the signing, which profoundly altered the conditions of its application. Here it is perhaps worth while to look at the details, while confining ourselves, of course, to these purely military clauses.

By replacing the last words in the following sentence, 'French Forces will receive the equipment necessary to them *as a matter of priority*', by a new phrase which I quote exactly: 'with the priority required by their military situation and which will be decided by the combined Chiefs of Staffs'; by this amendment Churchill laid the way open for any future interventions he might wish to make—in the interest of British Forces, of course, which were also dependent on America for their equipment.

When one further recalls that, in regard to actual deliveries, Churchill had added a stipulation, or rather restriction, to the effect that 'details (of deliveries) must be arranged in agreement with the Allied Commander-in-Chief', it is easy to understand why the application of the Anfa agreement, thus subjected to the appraisal of subordinate authorities—in this case A.F.H.Q. at Algiers—became so slow and so difficult.

For under the very eyes of the A.F.H.Q., during 1943, the political struggle for leadership between de Gaulle and Giraud was taking place—at the same time as these disturbances created in the Army by the desertions mentioned above.

The Allies had no intention of delivering material to the French under such conditions. On 9 December 1943, the A.F.H.Q. Chief-of-Staff, in private conversation with a Giraud staff officer, said: 'Since the French cannot agree among themselves there is no reason why they should fight the Germans with a unified spirit and *élan*. What is the use of giving them arms?'

Nor did the French and Allied General Staff succeed in reaching

agreement during 1943 on the precise organization of the units to be equipped with the arms promised at Anfa.

But, fortunately, the first deliveries—those for the ‘combat troops’—had been made without too much delay. So that, in the last quarter of the year, 3 infantry divisions were able to be sent to Italy. In August 1944 these 3 divisions were sent directly to Provence, where they proved themselves among the best of the landing forces. Thus, at the end of 1943, while we had these 3 divisions in action under General Juin, the plan of organization for the Landing Army was yet to be established.

At this time (January 1944), the arrival in Algiers of de Lattre, who had escaped from France, and the decisions taken by Giraud speeded up both the studies of the organization and the establishment and training of the troops to be embarked for Europe. By these decisions all the units stationed in North Africa were placed under the orders of General de Lattre, and designated as Army B, which only later, in France, became the First Army.

De Lattre immediately took personal charge of the application of the new plan of organization. From one end of French North Africa to the other—occasionally terrorizing senior officers, charming or flattering the younger ones—he urged on one and all towards the eagerly-awaited goal: the Landing.

He found this easier from March 1944, when his Staff—still very small—was partially integrated into that of Force 163 (pseudonym for the American VIIth Army) to prepare the plans of French coastal operations. Everybody in Army B saw that de Lattre was in the war ‘up to his neck’. This fact completely altered the atmosphere that had prevailed the previous year.

It was in Force 163 that de Lattre frequently had occasion to meet General Patch, Acting Commander of the VIIth Army and where a spirit of comradeship grew up between these two men, so similar in so many ways, which was to bear fruit during the campaign when de Lattre was for a time under Patch’s command, then his associate within the VIth Army Group.

Let it be added, also, that the brilliant successes of the French Troops in May 1944—particularly the breakthrough in the Petrella Hills by French-led Senegalese and Moroccan infantrymen which opened the way to Rome for the Allies—gave Patch’s General Staff a high opinion of the fighting qualities of the French.

Thus relations with the Allies had become excellent and the latter seem to have attached little importance to the last act of the struggle between de Gaulle and Giraud.

This was over the question of control of the Special Services, which the political powers intended to wrest from the army command. Giraud had to give in, but requested his retirement. As a result, the Special Services were diverted from military intelligence for several months. That did not help to make things easier for the operations of the First Army; it was not until the beginning of the winter, that an intelligence service was reorganized in France, and no time was lost in putting it to use.

But these final convulsive movements of the troubled political life of Algiers were soon to be eclipsed by the series of great military events of the early summer of 1944: 5 June, the capture of Rome; 6 June, the landings in Normandy, and particularly for the French, 17 June, the conquest of Elba.

Everyone felt that the Mediterranean invasion was close at hand, and the Normandy operation drove the troops awaiting embarkation orders almost mad with impatience.

Nevertheless, the date, 15 August, remained secret up to the very last moment.

So that, if afterwards 6 June was claimed to be 'the longest day', for the French Army, 15 August was 'the longest-awaited day'.

## 2. *Invasion and Pursuit*

From June onwards, the vast forces required for the Invasion were gradually assembled. They stretched from Oran to Tarento, passing through Corsica, Naples and Sicily. The French division embarked at Oran, Naples and Corsica.

Corsica, which had now become the springboard and the aircraft-carrier, had been liberated single-handed by Giraud in September 1943 with this object in mind. Most of the air squadrons that prepared and supported the operation were based on Corsica. The east coast of the island was packed with planes. So many were there that their propellers raised a cloud of dust that shrouded the whole island, and air traffic above had to maintain a left-hand circuit. Everything combined to give an impression of extraordinary strength and method.

But suddenly it appeared as if this enormous organization, this great war machine, were to be refashioned at the last moment. General de Gaulle's General Staff thought up and suggested a vast airborne



#### APPENDIX XXXIV

operation, aimed at the Massif Central, to join up with the *maquis* which, since the successes in Normandy had been organizing widespread resistance.

The Allies' refusal to furnish the means for such an enterprise stemmed as much from their repugnance for all manner of hasty improvisation—even for political ends—as from their care to ensure every chance of success for operation ANVIL-DRAGOON on the coast of Provence.

Thus ANVIL began on the appointed day at the fixed hour, and followed strictly the agreed plans.

It must be admitted that, in these plans, the initial role of Army B was somewhat secondary. Simply because, for technical reasons of liaison with the air and naval support forces, it was necessary to use English codes and vocabularies.

Thus, on J + 1, Army B landed on the shores of Provence, behind a first formation of the American 6th G.A., between Ste-Maxime and St-Raphaël, where one unit of the 1st D.B. had landed on the first day. The main French landing formation consisted of the advance guards of three Divisions (3rd D.I.A., 1st D.F.L., 9th D.I.C.) which made up one corps of Patch's army.

Events rapidly favoured this first French formation, and de Lattre seized the opportunity to escape from the supporting role he had been obliged to accept.

The progress made by the American VIth Army Corps was in fact very rapid and by J + 3 had reached a certain 'blue line' in the plans almost six days ahead of schedule. Beyond this point it was planned that the French divisions should overtake the Americans and press on to take first Toulon then Marseilles on their own.

Informed by Resistance agents of the state of quasi-insurrection reigning in both these towns, de Lattre, with the agreement of Patch, decided to attack the two towns without delay, not merely one after the other, but both simultaneously—and even with forces far smaller than those originally calculated.

After a week of very hard fighting—the episode of the Toulon powder-magazine followed by that of the Feste Fouresta at Marseilles—Army B, now playing the leading role in the invasion operation, crushed the German resistance, freed both ports and captured 40,000 prisoners. By 28 August the Battle of Provence was won—40 days ahead of schedule.

As we have said, Army B played the leading role in the operation from a very early stage.

As a matter of fact, during the battle for Toulon and Marseilles the Americans had pushed their advance well up the Durance towards Grenoble without encountering a single German.

After 28 August, although the battle for the ports was not yet over, Army B pushed an armoured detachment as far as Avignon—the key to Provence—without making contact with the enemy.

In fact, the German XIXth Army defending Provence had suddenly retreated northwards, leaving to their own devices the garrisons of Toulon and Marseilles, with the order to hold firm and form a pocket on the Mediterranean to prevent the Allies' use of the ports.

In the absence of any operational intelligence, only aerial reconnaissance was in a position to provide any explanation of the Germans' sudden disappearance, but the enemy moved only at night.

A fortnight later, when a German order to the XIXth and 1st Armies—the latter stationed on the Aquitaine coast—was found on an officer killed at Autun on 10 September, the reason for the XIXth pulling out became clear.

This order, dated 25 August referring to the Allies' successes in Normandy and the presence of their advance columns on the Seine above Paris, ordered both armies to withdraw towards Belfort-Mulhouse before their communications with Germany could be cut.

In addition, the XIXth Army was ordered to cover the 1st Army's line of retreat from south-west to north-east; i.e. it was to hold up for as long as necessary the advance of the Allies who had landed in Provence.

Three weeks were allowed for the execution of this order—i.e. till 15 September—and the two armies, and particularly the XIXth, were left considerable initiative in organizing their delaying action in depth, from Provence to Belfort.

Thus on 25 August, Patch's Army had lost contact with the enemy; the inexplicable void was a temptation to it to launch a pursuit. But the directives of General Eisenhower, who was already looking forward to the junction of the forces from the Mediterranean and from Normandy (we must not forget that the Allies were already on the Seine), decided Patch to take advantage of his Army's forward movement to shift the American VI Corps to the left wing—with the intention of joining up with Patton's right wing, which was also American. As a

result, Army B, after its conquest of Toulon and Marseilles, was to head for Grenoble *via* the lower valleys of the Alps.

De Lattre was far from pleased with this decision: from the operational angle, it seemed likely to delay for some time his encounter with the enemy and he was eager for another battle; and from the *standpoint of French policy*, it left the road to Lyons *via* the Rhone Valley and the prospect of liberating the thickly populated Lyons area to the Americans; while Army B would have only the region of the Alps, thinly populated and already partly liberated by the U.S. VIth Corps.

Patch readily agreed with the views of de Lattre, and so as to lose no more time in the pursuit, gave the right bank of the Rhone to Army B, with the aim of entering Lyons from the west, but insisted, however, that de Lattre send advance guards of three of his Divisions in the direction of Grenoble.

In this way Army B was divided into two parts, with the American VIth Corps between. But de Lattre had got a loophole in the right direction and he intended to exploit it to the full. He also hoped to gain enough ground in the Alps to draw abreast of the American advance as quickly as possible. To execute this manoeuvre he decided, on 1 September, to create the two army corps provided for in the plan: the Ist Army Corps in the east, and the IIInd in the Rhone Valley.

In this formation the entire VIIth Army took up the chase. But it was very soon slowed down by supply difficulties, which repeatedly worked to the German's advantage.

Lack of fuel was the daily theme of unit requisitions and reports at this time. For, while two months had been quickly and victoriously gained on the planned schedule, the shipping, that Nemesis of the Expeditionary Forces, was unable to keep pace. The maximum possible supplies were brought to the beaches, but they were not enough: one had to make the best of what there was.

Under these conditions the French and American advance columns were only able to make contact with the Germans again on an east-west line to the north of Lyons—which was liberated, without fighting, by the French IIInd Army Corps on 3 September—along a general line from Villefranche-sur-Saône to Meximieux where the German XIXth made such a vigorous stand that Patch decided to engage it so as to prevent it retreating any further. So he once again postponed adopting the formation with which the junction of the two Armies was to be effected.

Thus Army B remained divided—to the deep regret of de Lattre who had hoped to reunite it somewhere in the Bourg-Belfort area and to push on for Alsace, where he wished to arrive as quickly as possible and in any event well ahead of the Allies.

*(Here 21 pages of this speech have been omitted as they are primarily a technical military account of the German XIXth Army's delaying action, the battles for Alsace, the Vosges, Belfort, Strasbourg, Colmar, until the entry of de Lattre's forces into German territory from Wissembourg.)*

These mopping-up plans, dated 5 April had been approved by the VIth Army Group which, moreover, had taken responsibility for them in a later order dated 16 April. This order confirmed the mission the First Army had given itself in the Baden plain, but contained a new element in that it directed the VIIth Army to move towards Stuttgart (yes, Stuttgart), and thence *via* the Neckar valley to Schaffhausen. Moreover, it envisaged some synchronization of the two armies although it warned the First Army 'against making any premature advance'.

At the time, the significance of this order from the VIth Army Group, did not make much impression on de Lattre nor cause him to modify certain plans, the grounds of which are explained in his book.

But twenty years later things appear in a different light; so it is interesting to analyse the reasons behind this order of 16 April from General Devers.

Twenty years later, we know about the share-out that was made at the Yalta Conference of February 1945, in which France did not take part because she was not represented at the Conference: the division of Germany into British, American and Russian zones of occupation.

We now know that the highest echelons of Allied Command, the Army Groups, had been informed of the conclusions at Yalta at the very time when the surrender of Germany was apparently at hand. It was necessary to plan and effect operations for ending the war in a general interallied situation consistent with Yalta.

This obviously explains Devers's decision of 16 April, modifying the preceding order of 28 March which had given Stuttgart to the First Army; after 16 April Devers wished to keep the First Army in Baden to limit so far as possible the spread of French troops in Germany, since no provision for a French zone of occupation had been made at Yalta.

But de Lattre was unaware of the Yalta decisions. Therefore, in order to aid his neighbour Patch who had been held up by German resistance, it seemed to him normal to disobey the orders of the VIth A.G. and press on towards Stuttgart—which had earlier been given as his objective.

Also, and above all, it seemed to him in the French national interest to conquer as much German territory as possible. Moreover, for political motives, Paris had urged him to head for Sigmaringen.

And finally, there was Ulm attracting him for reasons evident to all, of course, but which had more hold on him than on anyone else.

Consequently there are many factors to explain, if not justify, *de Lattre's disobedience to Devers's orders* when, from Freudenstadt on, far from keeping his Divisions in the Black Forest, he had them fan out over all the main roads of Würtemberg: the IIIrd D.I.A. and Vth D.B. towards Stuttgart, the IXth D.I.C. and IVth D.M.M. towards Schaffhausen, the IIInd D.I.M. towards Constance, the Ist D.B. towards Sigmaringen and Ulm.

The First Army occupied Ulm, in the heart of the VIIth Army Zone without advance notice or authorization. Stuttgart might have been overlooked; but Ulm was too much. Devers really lost his temper: 'Tell your General', he expostulated to the First Army Chief-of-Staff summoned to his Command Post in Heidelberg, 'Tell your General that the artillery will open up if this mess isn't straightened out by tonight.'

De Lattre obeyed and evacuated Ulm. He didn't feel guilty about the incident, but he tried to bury it a few weeks later, at the end of the war, by organizing at Constance and Lindau a magnificent military parade—in his own inimitable style and which the Germans probably remember to this day—in homage to General Devers who was relinquishing his command.

Ulm would have been the only event to give any colour, if one may use the term, to the last stages of the campaign in Germany—the destruction of two German Army Corps, one in the Stuttgart region and the other east of the Black Forest, went almost unnoticed during the Ulm crisis—if new intelligence from Switzerland, around 25 April, had not suggested that the German Army, concentrated in an Alpine redoubt, was preparing a final hopeless resistance.

Some Swiss Army officers—some of whom used to come and join

in firing with the French artillerymen—came and told us, 'You will be caught like rats in a trap when you get to the Vorarlberg.'

This possibility of *renewed action* was probably taken into account in the VIth A.G. decision (following the Ulm affair) to post the First Army in another direction. Hence it was able to continue its advance right into Austria, which it entered by both the Vorarlberg and the St Anton Massif on 27 April. It had encountered no enemy defences of the kind described, and found only débris along the way.

And so, by the end of April *the war was practically over*. German towns and villages flew white flags to advertise their complete submission to the victors. Indeed, the Army and German people were truly conquered. In the space of one month the First Army conquered an expanse of German territory equivalent to Alsace, Lorraine and the Champagne combined.

As this extraordinary conquest slowed down, the events occurring each day caused little surprise now, at the beginning of May, although excitement was not lacking.

The liberation of prisoners, D.P.s, and well-known Frenchmen was followed by the formal and solemn meetings of *capitulation* of the German Armies, and brought the First Army, in the person of its Chief, from Innsbruck first to Lindau, then to Berlin.

De Lattre ends his book with the capitulation in Berlin, on 8 May 1945. However, the history of the First French Army does not finish there.

For, a few days later a First Army regiment came to Berlin to garrison the capital of the Reich.

They were the *IIIrd African Rifles*.

But one recalls that it was the African Rifles who charged heroically at Sedan in 1870, on the eve of our misfortunes, drawing from William I, the future Emperor of Germany, this phrase now woven into our history:

*'Ah, les braves gens.'*

General de Lattre went to Berlin a second time on 5 June 1945, a month after the formal capitulation, this time for the inaugural meeting of the *Interallied Control Commission* which was to organize the military government of a Germany dispossessed, after her defeat, of all political authority.

De Lattre found himself in the company of Eisenhower, Montgomery and Zhukov.

Thus France, although unrepresented at the Yalta conference in February, was present three months later at an interallied meeting *on an equal footing* with the victorious Great Powers.

It is beyond doubt that her presence at this meeting was due to the First Army which had just conquered an area in Germany comparable in size to the regions of the other Allied Armies and which was about to become the French zone of occupation.

Now, twenty years after 1945, with serious problems issuing from the Second World War still unsolved—in particular, the reunification of Germany, and the liberalization of East European countries—France, a former occupying power, is still among the great States which now have to find the solutions on which the future and world peace depend.

The lapse of time shows, with blinding clarity, that it was absolutely necessary for France, after her defeat of 1940, to reconstitute her Army and contribute to the military conclusion of the war in order to regain her *position amongst the concert of powers*.

She would have been guilty of an error—no, a blunder—disastrous for her destiny if, in 1943, when the opportunity arose in North Africa to reforge her weapons, she had chosen *political rather than military aims*.

Can one be sure, twenty years after, that successes such as Paris, Strasbourg, Berchtesgaden, spectacular though they were, would have been enough to ensure the place France still holds today in Berlin, in Germany, in Europe, in the world?

The question is still relevant in 1965.

To whom should go the gratitude and thanks of people who have a profound interest in their country and its future?

Without doubt, first to Weygand who pointed out to the Army of Africa, at the end of 1940, the reasons for its reorganization and the goal to be achieved. From that time on, the Army of Africa knew that it would one day re-enter the war alongside the Allies. It was prepared to become the First French Army.

Without doubt, thanks must also go to Giraud, who was trusted by America and made agreements with her, which permitted the establishment of an army worthy of France, with modern weapons like those of the Allies. To arrive at his goal, his one aim, Giraud sacrificed his personal career and did not taste the pleasure of victories over the Germans. The country's debt to him is all the deeper for this reason.

## ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY

In addition, Giraud had made a good choice in putting de Lattre in charge of Army B, the future First Army. Able, dynamic, enthusiastic, an improviser rather than an organizer, de Lattre was the very man for situations that were sometimes difficult and always hazardous. We have seen him, a skilful negotiator, seize favourable opportunities at once and, from one loophole to the next—from Provence to the Black Forest, including the Vosges and particularly the Rhine—give his Army an ever greater role. The final display of his Divisions, the Anfa Divisions, fanning out from Freudenstadt all over Southern Germany, assured for France a position which might otherwise have been disputed.

In nine months of almost ceaseless action, the apparently ill-assorted First Army followed him with a single faith and will to victory.

It was indeed fortunate that the First Army had been created and was available to serve France, then as now.

This is the thought I wish to leave with you in concluding this survey of the main stages which marked the 1944-5 campaign of the First Army through the liberation of ten provinces of France up to the Victory.



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